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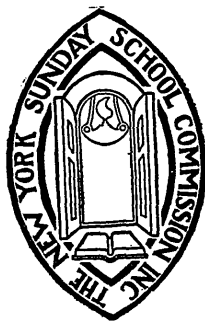
God's Little Children

Their Nature and Religious Training

FOR
Kindergarten and Primary Teachers

BY
IONE PRATT HARTFORD

*Kindergartner of St. Bartholomew's Parish House Sunday School
New York*



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To
My Mother



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PREFACE

THREE deep-rooted convictions underlie what follows: (1) Each child has an individuality necessary for the teacher to know. (2) The whole child goes to Sunday-school. (3) The successful Sunday-school teacher recognizes the physical and intellectual needs and limitations of her children in her plans for the development of their spiritual nature. With these thoughts in mind, guided by the light of personal experience, by extensive reading, and by observation of the work of others, the writer has tried to give such aid as will facilitate the task of parents and teachers of children under nine or ten years old.

To all who have contributed to this little book by their example, or by their spoken or written word, indebtedness is acknowledged. But I am particularly grateful for the advice and criticisms of my late husband, Mr. Herbert Hartford, whose confidence and never-failing interest in my work were a constant source of encouragement to me.

IONE PRATT HARTFORD.

FOREWORD

KINDERGARTEN and Primary teachers will welcome a book to guide them in their fascinating but difficult task. There are other books which serve as guides in the higher grades, or which cover the whole field of child study and method, but none, so far as we know, that specializes upon the Kindergarten and Primary child. This Mrs. Hartford's book does. In "God's Little Children: Their Nature and Religious Training," she singles out this child from the mass of children and enables us to see him as a separate individual. She details the methods peculiarly adapted to this early age, and helps us to distinguish between these and the more general methods. She sets forth the special aim that should govern the Kindergarten and Primary teacher, as contrasted with the general aim of Sunday-school work of which the special aim is a constituent part. All this the teacher in these lower grades has hitherto had to do for herself. It is now done for her, and done far better than she could hope to do it, unless she herself were a specialist.

This book is not a system of Lessons for use in the Sunday-school class, or one to be used in connection with the children at all. It is rather a book for the general preparation of the teacher, either by herself alone or in training classes, in anticipation of her work. By a careful study of it no teacher can fail to be better equipped for the work that lies before her. By a thor-

ough mastery of it every teacher must come to her task with greater intelligence, discrimination, enthusiasm and success.

Mrs. Hartford does not write primarily from a theoretical point of view, although she is evidently familiar with it, but from the standpoint of long experience as a Kindergarten and Primary teacher in St. Andrew's and St. Bartholomew's Parish House Sunday-schools, New York, and her book finds its chief value in the fact that it is the product of true experience. She writes pleasantly and clearly and, best of all, convincingly, with the same helpfulness to parent as to teacher.

We heartily commend her book to all who would bring their teaching up to a higher degree of excellence. We wish it might be included in the necessary preparation of those who are looking forward to Kindergarten and Primary work.

CHARLES H. BOYNTON.

"Come, let us live with our children."—*Froebel*.

"And so you may be polite to a child, and pretend to appreciate his point of view; but, unless you really do put yourself to the trouble of understanding him, unless you throw yourself, by the exercise of imagination, into his world, you will not succeed in being his friend. To be his friend means an effort on your part. It means that you must divest yourself of your own mental habit, and, for the time being, adopt his. And no nice phrases, no gifts of money, sweets, or toys, can take the place of this effort and this sacrifice of self. With five minutes of genuine surrender to him, you can win more of his esteem and gratitude than five hundred pounds would buy. His notion of real goodwill is the imaginative sharing of his feelings, a convinced participation in his pains and pleasures."

ARNOLD BENNETT.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE

The following books are recommended for reading in connection with this text. All of these books may be purchased from the New York Sunday School Commission, Inc., 73 Fifth Ave., New York, or The Young Churchman Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

OF GENERAL INTEREST

- Adler. *The Moral Instruction of Children* (D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50).
Coe. *Education in Religion and Morals* (Revell, \$1.35).
Dewey. *Ethical Principles Underlying Education* (Uni. of Chicago Press. \$1.50).
Froebel. *The Education of Man* (D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50).
Forbush. *The Coming Generation* (D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50).
Raymont. *The Use of the Bible in the Education of the Young* (Longmans, Green, & Co. \$1.25).
Smith. *Religious Education* (Young Churchman Co. \$2.00).

OUTLINES OF CHILD STUDY

- Harrison. *A Study of Child Nature* (Chicago Kindergarten College. \$1.00).
Oppenheim. *The Development of the Child* (The Macmillan Co. \$1.25).
Pyle. *The Outlines of Educational Psychology* (Warwick & York).
Tanner. *The Child, His Thinking, Feeling and Doing* (Rand McNally. \$1.00).
Taylor. *The Study of the Child* (D. Appleton & Co. \$1.25).

CONCERNING METHODS

Dewey. *Schools of To-day* (\$1.50).

Froebel. *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten* (D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50).

Montessori. *The Montessori Method* (Frederick A. Stokes Co. \$1.75).

CONCERNING THE TEACHER

Palmer. *The Ideal Teacher* (Houghton, Mifflin Co. 35 cents).

Mark. *The Teacher and the Child* (Revell, 75 cents).

Weigle. *The Pupil and Teacher* (Doran, 50 cents).

CONCERNING THE STORY

Bailey. *For the Story Teller* (Milton Bradley Co. \$1.50).

Bryant. *How to Tell Stories to Children* (Houghton, Mifflin Co. \$1.00).

Houghton. *Telling Bible Stories* (Scribner. \$1.25).

St. John. *Stories and Story Telling* (Pilgrim Press, 50 cents).

CONCERNING THE TEACHING OF THE LESSON

Betts. *The Recitation* (Houghton, Mifflin Co. 60 cents).

Du Bois. *The Point of Contact in Teaching* (Dodd Mead & Co. 75 cents).

Fitch. *The Art of Securing Attention* (15 cents).

The Art of Holding Attention (Flanagan & Co. 50 cents).

James. *Talks to Teachers* (Henry Holt & Co. \$1.50).

CONCERNING EXPRESSSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Bailey & Lewis. *Daily Program of Gift and Occupation Work* (Milton Bradley Co. 50 cents).

Dodds. *Primary Handwork* (The Macmillan Co. 75 cents).

Littlefield. *Handwork in the Sunday School* (S. S. Times. \$1.00).

Smith. *Prayers and Praises for the Church School*.

Wiebe. *Paradise of Childhood* (Milton Bradley Co. \$2.00).

CHAPTER I

CHILD NATURE: INFANCY AND THE INSTINCTIVE BASIS

THE history of education discloses the names of many earnest men who have sought to find the child's proper place in the scheme of things, as well as the best methods and the best means for fitting him to occupy it. But it has remained for scientific research and the card catalogue to lift children entirely out of the obscurity to which the old saw, "Children should be seen, not heard," formerly consigned them, and to make them the center of observation and study by all who are intelligently interested in child welfare. The modern Sunday-school teacher, like her fellow-workers in other fields, has become a student of child-nature, of instruction materials, and of methods of teaching. She is not content with the sentimental description of the child, which calls him a "little flower" or a "little man," but turns to the sciences for more exact information and a deeper insight.

What Physiology Teaches Us

Physiology, biology, and psychology are each contributing to bring about a better understanding of the meaning of childhood and a better knowledge of

its laws of growth and development. The physiologist tells us the child is not a "little man." From him we learn that the proportions of the various parts of the body at different stages of growth differ from their proportions at maturity; for example, the height of an infant's head is half that of the adult's; the length of its body is one-third that of the adult's; and its arms and legs are, respectively, one-fourth and one-fifth as long as in maturity. There are differences, also, in the size of the vital organs, in the chemical structure of bones, blood, and nerves, and in the physiological processes—circulation, respiration, and digestion.

Growth in Height and Weight

Observations on a very extended scale show that growth does not proceed at a uniform and steady rate throughout the years of childhood. A child's weight at the end of the first year is, normally, three times its weight at birth; the average boy at twelve months weighs slightly less than twenty-two pounds, the average girl not quite twenty-one and a half pounds. At six and a half years the average weight of boys is less than forty-six pounds, of girls it is under forty-four pounds; at nine and a half years the average boy's weight is not quite sixty pounds, and the average girl's not quite fifty-eight. Further study of this subject leads to the conclusion that at certain periods increase in weight is accelerated, at other times retarded, while a comparative study of the changing heights of children, year by year, indicates that here,

too, seasons of rapid growth precede seasons of slow growth; that when the increase in weight is greatest the gain in height is slight.

The First Transitional Period

The years between six and nine, with both boys and girls, are marked by decided physical and mental changes. The appearance of the second teeth is an outward sign of the passing of babyhood, and the change in mentality warns us that the brain is rapidly developing and that new connections are being made between the nerve centers. One writer says, "This wild animal period, which demands outdoor beds at home and loosened seats at school, is doubtless the era of a struggle for a physical constitution. All the endurance, the reserve power, the tenacity of later years is being stored up during these treasure-house years between five and twelve. During the last three or four of these years, vitality is a little less exuberant. They might be called the special period of restful growth. Mentally, they are somewhat stolid and silent."

What Infancy Is

The message of biology is that this period of immaturity, so charming in many respects, is a season of plasticity—of capacity for being molded physically and mentally—wisely provided by nature to enable humanity to fit itself for the business of life. In this formative period of childhood such adjustments must be made between the individual and his environment as will result in his ability to control self,

and to bend to his uses the great forces of nature. As our civilization becomes constantly more complex, there is increasing need for a prolonged infancy.

Biologists have also given us a recapitulation theory, based upon the doctrine of evolution, that has made us recognize that growth is a development from within from a lower plane to a higher one; that the life of the individual, no less than the progress of the race and of all humanity, presents a continuous unfolding from lower to more advanced forms and abilities, each later one dependent for its fulness and perfection upon the way in which the preceding period has been lived. A childhood denied the joys that are its rightful inheritance makes for a barren manhood and womanhood. Each phase—infancy, childhood, youth, manhood, old age—has its own peculiar physical and mental characteristics; its own powers and limitations; its own capacities for joy and sorrow that set it apart from all the others. Each is distinct from the rest. "Yet the boy has not become a boy," says Froebel, "nor has the youth become a youth, by reaching a certain age, but only by having lived through childhood, and, further on, through boyhood, true to the requirements of his mind, his feelings, and his body; similarly, adult man has not become an adult man by reaching a certain age, but only by faithfully satisfying the requirements of his childhood, boyhood, and youth."

Child Study Imperative

S. Paul said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child"; and because the statement is universal in its applica-

tion, it is our duty to learn from what the child says and does what he things about, and by what steps he approaches rational understanding. The importance of real child-study, therefore, cannot be doubted; and the conscientious person very soon realizes the impossibility of classifying all the mental, moral, and spiritual elements of every child's nature on the basis of facts gleaned from observation of only a limited number of children. Even where external conditions are similar there is that variation, due to differences in physical and mental inheritance, that limits capacity for intellectual and spiritual growth.

Temperamental Types

Recognition of this fact has led to many attempts to classify persons with reference to temperament—the prevailing mental bias or disposition due to bodily constitution. In a general way, people may be designated as being of the motor or active type, or of the sedentary or sessile type. Each of these classes may be subdivided—the latter, into the corpulent-vital and the speculative or reflective-sedentary; the former, into muscular-motor and nervous or ideo-motor. There was a time (it has not quite passed) when the phlegmatic child with round face, pale skin, and very light hair—so difficult to excite that one almost felt the need of high explosives to move him—was not only called dull, but was censured for a condition outside his control. The same methods were (and, too often, still are) used with him and with the quick “ideo-motor” child; and when tests and examination papers showed unsatisfactory results the

cause was not always rightly assigned. But with wider knowledge new vistas of responsibility are opened; learning takes its rightful place in the educational process, and efficiency and morality are estimated at their true value in the child's life; old methods are replaced by new ones that make a stronger appeal to muscular-motor and to phlegmatic children.

In religious training, too, temperamental differences are significant to the educator. The phlegmatic nature, though not easily excited, is usually sympathetic and likely to be mindful of the rights of others, while the speculative mind—not at first readily withdrawn from its own musings—may be led to express itself in splendidly unselfish service. Muscular-motor and nervous-motor children are neither precocious nor dull intellectually, and both can be trained to great efficiency and high morality.

The Child's Debt to Heredity

In the long ages since man's upward progress began the race has passed through many stages, every one of which with its environing conditions has left its impress, and helped to direct the next step forward. On the physical side, there is a systematic progression from the lowest and simplest forms of cell life to the higher and more complex ones, each earlier state leaving a hereditary mark upon the later, more complicated structures. Man's intellectual and spiritual nature has advanced similarly from prim-

itive ideals and attainments to those that are to-day the finest flower of our civilization.

It is reasonable to believe that in each of these successive steps mankind learned some particular lesson, a definite way of reacting upon the peculiar conditions it had to face, and that the instincts and tendencies that are a part of our racial inheritance are a record of its struggles. Life spells activity—response to incentive from within or without. Contrasting the well-ordered behavior of the kindergarten child with the aimless movements of the helpless infant, one feels surprise at the improvement shown in so short a time. How has he learned to do so many things so quickly? Some of his acts are the result of direct teaching, others of imitation, either conscious or unconscious; but neither dictation nor imitation explains the baby's first efforts to creep or to walk—an inner cause, one that impels to action without any consciousness of ends, is at work here. And it is this innate urgency, or impulse, or instinct, that is the germ of all our life of action.

Instincts Defined

James writes, "Instinct is usually defined as the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends without foresight of the ends, and without previous education in the performance." A simpler definition of instincts, which expresses at the same time the theory of their origin, is this: "Instincts are definite, complex forms of inherited response to definite stimuli."

The child has been called a "bundle of instincts,"

and justly it would seem, for we are told that he has a larger equipment of them than any other mammal. Many of these native reactions have little direct interest for the teacher; for example, those that are purely reflex in character, such as grasping at anything that touches the hand; or those that are purely transitory, as creeping. But instincts that have an educational value, and especially those that arise and are strongest in the earlier years of school life, compel our attention. It is most important that both parents and teachers be able to recognize in the child's exhibitions the various instincts of which they are the evidence, since it is by their training and growth into right habits that the proper building up of personality is insured.

Their Order of Appearance

Quite in harmony with the theory that in its mental development the child passes through stages analogous to the successive upward steps in the progress of the race is the fact that the various instincts appear in definite order, become fixed habits of action under favorable conditions and training, or, on the other hand, are by inhibition or substitution forever lost. Oh, that parents could see in the angry crying of their tiny child the germ of that horrid selfishness which, if not checked, may grow into malice and hatred, and even vent itself in murder; and in his sweet trustfulness recognize the tendency to confide in father and mother—a precious tendency which, far too often, discouraged by lack of sympathy or by harshness, is turned into secretiveness and slyness,

to the child's serious detriment in the later adolescent period.

There is still much to learn about instincts and the sequence of their appearance. Owing to the complexity of human nature and the far-reaching influence of environment, it is impossible to fix upon any age as the absolute limit for the appearance of a particular instinct in individual cases, though we can approximate the time when they will generally show themselves under ordinary normal conditions. Instincts are said to be nascent when they are growing in strength, and this is the time to feed the useful ones. If a child shows the awakening social instinct in a desire to be helpful to mother, encourage him by giving him something to do. To put him off until a more convenient time may be fatal; when the child himself shows us that the time is ripe, let us take advantage of his good impulses.

The Collecting Instinct

By way of illustration, take the collecting instinct which makes its appearance before the child is three years old. By the age of six it is well defined; it reaches its culmination by ten, and before fourteen years any useful reactions or habits growing out of the impulse must be clinched. During these years the motives for collecting and the classes of objects assembled will change many times. Childish satisfaction growing out of the activity will express itself differently from year to year. The child's earliest motives are very superficial, depending upon the merest fancies: the brightness of a bit of glass, the

smoothness of a round pebble attracts; later, imitation steps in and there is a blind desire to equal his fellows in gathering many objects of a class. Cannot you recall your string of buttons, or the bag of marbles that was your joy and pride? In time, interest in making collections for their own sake wanes and disappears, and the survival of the instinct is threatened unless wise suggestion and guidance set the youthful mind in quest of material of real value—pictures, minerals, botanical specimens, what not—related to the daily life and school work of the child.

The Baser Instincts

When tendencies to unlovely actions or feelings first present themselves they too must be suitably met. Sometimes an act is sporadic, so to speak, and is performed but once; simply to let it pass without comment is then the best treatment. This method is most effective with young children. One thing needs to be remembered: no instinct should be repressed without suggesting a better activity to take its place. Physics teaches that nature abhors a vacuum, and the mental and spiritual life presents a parallel, strikingly illustrated in the well-known New Testament story found in the twelfth chapter of S. Matthew—the story of the seven other spirits that entered the “empty, swept, and garnished” house.

Stages of Child Development

Dr. Alford Butler has conveniently named the first three years of the child's life the Age of Instinct; the second three, the Age of Impulse; the third three,

the Age of Imitation. These terms are practically self-explanatory. The child comes into the world without knowledge or self-consciousness. The day in which he discovers his hands marks an epoch in his intellectual development. All his earliest responses to the stimuli of his surroundings are instinctive, inherited, unlearned reactions. All his wants and needs appear to be physical, but, notwithstanding this, he is already absorbing impressions of the things and persons about him; and Froebel says the religious spirit "will hardly, in later years, rise to full vigorous life if it has not grown up with man from his infancy"; and that it is "the fruit of earlier and earliest religious example on the part of the parents, even when the child does not seem to notice it or to understand it. Indeed, this is the case with all living parental example."

The work of achieving a personality begins with the dawn of self-consciousness; the feelings assert themselves in well-defined likes and dislikes. At first reason and forethought are so rudimentary as to be practically negligible as motive forces, but impulse gradually replaces instinct, and passing fancies govern the child's actions from moment to moment. With the strengthening of the social instinct comes the desire to do as others are doing, and imitation becomes a factor in conduct.

Grading Children According to Age

Classifying children in accordance with the scheme adopted by thoroughly graded schools, we should place those three or four to six years of age in the kinder-

garten or beginners' department of the Church School; those from six to eight or nine years old in the primary department. In speaking of the characteristics peculiar to these years, it is to be understood that due allowance must be made for the variations in individuals. Age is a matter of disposition as well as of years; of race, of health, of sex, and of environment. Other things being equal, girls are mentally older than boys; Slavic children older than Latins, and the latter older than Teutonic children; while the reflective, careful, anxious child is mentally older than the heedless, lively one, who tears his way through life from one activity to another without thought of to-morrow, or of its consequences.

CHAPTER II

CHILD NATURE: SELF-ACTIVITY AND THE SENSES

SELF-ACTIVITY, energy working from within, originating in self, is characteristic of all living things. Without it there can be no adjustment between the individual and his environment; without it the plant could not absorb moisture from the soil, the animal would be inert as the stone, and man would starve physically and intellectually.

The child's earliest unconscious obedience to the commands of self-activity is heard in the infant's tiny cries, and seen in his stretchings and kickings. Use promotes growth, and as the muscles are exercised they steadily become stronger, and greater control of them is gained. The kindergarten child should be able to do many things for himself, but frequently the practice of home and school keeps him dependent because of our unwillingness to await the results of his clumsy, stumbling efforts. As the nervous system develops, these crude attempts are transformed into movements of greater exactness and nicety, and the child is capable of more sustained efforts; but the transition from kindergarten to primary standards of requirement should be by easy steps.

Among the child's most obvious characteristics on entering the kindergarten are his restlessness and

lack of physical control. Restlessness, in the sense of a desire to be busy, is a sign of good health; but wriggling and squirming and inability to fix attention and effort are another matter, and may be due to fatigue, to low vitality, or to malnutrition. Plainly, it is our duty under such circumstances to seek for causes and to apply remedies, if possible; not to provide an outlet for the discharge of his muscular energy is a crime against the child and his years.

Play

When the baby coos and smiles, when he tries to catch a shadow or a sunbeam on the wall, when he throws his spoon upon the floor, we say that he is playing. As he grows older his manipulations of toys, kindergarten materials, and books come under the same head. All the outward manifestations of the child's spontaneous self-activity, accompanied by the joy of being, may be summed up in that one word—play. Froebel says of the plays of childhood that they "are the germinal leaves of all later life; for the whole man is developed and shown in these, in his tenderest dispositions, in his innermost tendencies." Happily, and unconsciously, the child is developing as he builds his little world in play. It would be a long step forward if the school environment could be so manipulated that the child would more often go to his work there with the same zest and energy that he spends upon his play. If the Spirit of Playfulness, of which play is a kind of precipitate, ruled in the school-room, the atmosphere of heaviness and inelasticity would be banished, and

every normal child would be aquiver with enthusiasm; a condition that might be attained if our methods of instruction were brought into true harmony with child nature.

Play and Self-Expression

The phenomena of play may be interpreted as activity growing out of excess energy, directed by the child's spontaneous interests and impulses. Though sometimes spoken of as a separate instinct, play seems rather to give opportunity for self-expression through many ripening instincts. Imitation and imagination enter in prominently; and the running games, such as prisoner's base and fox and hounds, for example, tent and cave games, and others, are believed by some psychologists to be instinctive; the natural out-flow of energy through brain-channels established by necessity when the race was in its infancy.

The child's free play is an index to the needs and conditions of his developing body, and a reflection of his physical and mental environment. The infant finds pleasure in rattling a newspaper or tearing it to bits, and all the time he is making experiments and exercising muscles. The three-year-old is satisfied to dig, or to make mud-pies; he is extremely individualistic, and often selfish. What he wants most of all is a tool to work with, and freedom to carry out his intentions. Sometimes he asks for the approval of grown-ups, but more often all he asks is to be left undisturbed; and, pray, do not think you make him happy by doing his work for him! Occasionally he leaves his absorbing occupations for a while, and in company with other children becomes a shopkeeper,

or a soldier with a stick for a sword; but let another child interpose his will and the little group loses its attraction.

Progressive Stages of Natural Play

George Ellsworth Johnson, in his book on "Education by Plays and Games," says that until the close of the third year the natural plays of the child are such as to aid in the development of his various powers. They consist of movements of the head, body, and limbs; experimenting with the senses; getting control of the body; "the plays constantly widening the field of motor activity, sense perception, memory, imitation, and speech."

The natural plays of the second period are to a large extent an outgrowth of those of the first period; with children of five or six there is more conscious imitation, a demand for more action, more drama. Organized games are still not generally attractive, though ring games make an appeal, and those of the kindergarten are undoubtedly enjoyed because, added to their social background, is their appeal to the child as an individual. The spontaneous play activities of this period are characterized by ceaseless repetition and impersonation, with very little purpose running through them. The toy interest centers about common objects susceptible of much handling, much putting together and taking-apart; about dolls and teddy-bears; and about toys that are of practical use in digging and hauling, in playing house and school.

Coming to children of primary age, we find that at seven years the majority are at play with others of

their kind; very few seek the companionship of adults in preference, and not many choose to play alone. Informal, unorganized plays are giving way to games governed by set rules, though the individualistic tendency is still in evidence, and every one plays for himself. There is perhaps a little decline in selfishness, but not enough to make truly coöperative games popular; personal wishes are not yet sunk in the desire for a common end or good. With the quickening of the competitive spirit at the age of eight or nine many plays and occupations are "predominantly mere practice and trials of strength, and aim simply at display of strength." Running games, such as hide-and-seek, become increasingly popular; with girls from seven to ten, the interest in doll games is at its height. But wider knowledge and more utilitarian ideas come with years, and seek an outlet in purposeful employment: the boy gets out his set of carpenter's tools with the idea of really making something, and the girl sews clothes for her doll, and tries her hand at embroidering a centerpiece for Mother's Christmas gift.

To the teacher of young children play is a subject of vital importance, since it is so valuable as a means of education in the years of later infancy. To the child it is a realizing medium for the life about him, enriching his nature mentally and emotionally, and preparing him for the broader life of maturity.

Imitation

At first the imitative instinct is little more than an unconscious impulse to reproduce an act, but later

becomes a persistent effort with a well-defined aim that is not satisfied until the desired end is secured. In this way, principally, the child learns to feed himself, to dress himself, and to perform many little acts of courtesy and helpfulness. His earliest imitations are of the sounds and motions of those about him; unusual mannerisms are almost certain to catch his eye; any physical deformity or abnormality is sure to be seized upon; and only when he grows older does his capacity to make distinctions between thought and action lead to his appropriation of the ideas of others. Even in children of school age imitation is frequently unconscious. Many a teacher has found, to her chagrin, half the class imitating an absurd or unnecessary motion of hers, such as nodding the head to mark emphasis.

Until the age of three or four, children most often imitate the activities of adults, and to a less degree those of animals and other children; by eight years of age, animals are seldom imitated, children more often than animals, and adults more frequently than at the age of three. By the age of eight, when imitation is strongest, most children are able to separate the idea from the act and to imitate the former, using it in such combinations of circumstances as may suit their purposes; motor activities are more frequently imitated than at any previous time, but there is a falling-off from the imitation of speech, which is more general in those years in which the child is making rapid progress in building his vocabulary. Between the years of three and eight there is

a growing tendency to imitate action and speech together. The dramatic plays of children are an outlet for this impulse.

Imitation and Morality

But the most important office of imitation is the part it plays in the development of the moral life. The child accepts the standards of accustomed surroundings without question. He reacts to them as he sees those about him doing. If blows and angry voices and profanity are the rule when things go wrong, the child will resort to these measures when thwarted. It is only as he becomes more intelligent and gains an insight into other conditions than those familiar in his own home, that he begins to criticize the latter.

Other Useful Traits

Credulity and suggestibility are marked in early childhood; the younger the child the more implicitly he believes whatever is told him, and the more readily he comes under the sway of suggestion. The results of very interesting experiments made to measure the power of suggestion against the direct evidence of the senses indicate that all children, depending upon their age and general intelligence, are more or less ready to accept without reflection ideas unobtrusively called up by other associated ideas. It is generally held that the age at which children are most amenable to suggestion is about eight or nine years—when the spirit of criticism is still weak and directions are fairly well understood. Previously to this time the tendency to believe in and to respond to what is said

is hampered by incomplete understanding of language; and after nine years, by a growing disposition to question things in the light of personal observation.

Some one has called credulity "the glory of the child." It is, with suggestibility, a measure of his teachableness. If children continually doubted what they are told; if they were wooden to the suggestions of home life, of nature, of music, of all the other good influences ordinarily brought to bear upon them, it is difficult to say what would be their loss.

The "Gateways" to the Mind

The normal child brings with him into the world besides his heritage of instincts an equipment of nerves and muscles that will enable him to acquire a knowledge of his surroundings. It is interesting to remember that the body not only clothes the soul, but, as the seat of the senses, establishes communication between it and the beautiful outer world.

The instinct of investigation is the impulse that prompts the senses to activity, and opens the door to the child's intellectual life by filling his mind with impressions of everything tangible. The four-year-old goes to kindergarten with his head full of ideas and fragments of ideas about the things that are a part of his environment. We are told that a child learns more in the first six years than in his entire university career. He absorbs impressions almost as a sponge takes up water—a fact sometimes ignored. Just as his first muscular movements are the result of instinct, so his earliest perceptions of light, of color, sound and texture are the result of acts un-

conscious and involuntary; and as exercise and training are essential to the accurate and controlled movement of hand and foot and body, so coördination and development are necessary to the perfection of the senses. By a sort of natural education the child learns to hear, to see, to touch, just as he will later learn to walk and to talk.

The Moral Aspect of the Senses

But the study of the child's sensations from the physical side is only incidentally important to the teacher, except for its bearing upon his mental and moral progress. Defective vision and poor hearing, if undetected, may bring upon the child the charge of dullness and inattention, and remonstrances from parent and teacher but serve to awaken his sense of injustice and to breed discontent and sullenness or indifference. The sense of taste, which ought merely to give zest to the appetite and make the task of furnishing the body with fuel pleasant and healthful, may be so perverted that eating becomes an end in itself, with gluttony and intemperance conducing finally to ill-health and moral laxness. This problem belongs primarily to the mother, since these habits are commonly the product of poor home training; but it may become the teacher's also, for all the fibres of man's nature are so tightly interwoven that over-indulgence anywhere weakens the whole fabric. Taste as a force in the development to the esthetic nature imposes a task upon the school; for while it is true that so much of the best in art, in literature and in music is within the reach of the masses, it is equally

true that the mediocre and the tawdry are even more accessible, and will often be preferred to what is good unless power to discriminate between the two is formed outside the home.

Touch Proper, Sight, and Hearing

The senses most nearly related to the intellectual life are touch proper, whose function it is to make us acquainted with the tactual properties of matter, as form, hardness, smoothness, sight, and hearing. Even adults feel the need of handling things in order to know them intimately: at exhibitions of various sorts the usual sign "Do not touch" is sufficient evidence of this fact. But children feel it more, and the prohibition so constantly on the lips of their elders must be positively painful to the wide-awake boy and girl, whose fingers fairly ache to verify the reports of their eyes. The powers of observation of normal children of kindergarten and primary age are very keen at times; little escapes their eyes, and the old saying, "Little pitchers have big ears," is a tribute to their hearing, as well as to their interest in everything that presents the slightest familiar feature. If they sometimes err in judgment because of their eagerness to welcome the known, would it not be fair to attribute a part of their mistakes, at least, to the fact that they have not been trained to see and to hear accurately? That too many lessons have been *about* things instead of dealing with the objects themselves?

The Concrete versus the Symbolic

It is true of this period that the concrete makes a strong appeal to the child, and teachers of both kin-

dergarten and primary grades need to make extensive use of objects and illustrative material of every kind to render things intelligible to him. The child must gain through the senses a full comprehension of the physical meaning of words before he can transfer that meaning to internal qualities. In other words, abstract ideas demand a concrete background. We speak of the symbolic age in children, but experience with a few of them satisfies the most hopeful teacher that symbolism means one thing to the child, and quite another thing to the adult; the latter requires an inner connection between symbol and fact; the former makes one thing stand for another thing. He overturns a chair and calls it a boat or a railway-coach as fancy may dictate. Attempt to teach him the story of Noah and the Ark, with any idea of imparting to him—or rather, of having him grasp—its symbolic significance as understood by the Church, and flat failure stares you in the face. A fact presented in symbolic form before the child is intellectually ready to receive it is far more likely to suggest ideas that are literal and materialistic (as in the case of the small boy who declined to be Jesus' little lamb—"because I would have to eat grass,") than to be a source of inspiration.

CHAPTER III

CHILD NATURE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTELLECT

Memory

BOTH memory and imagination deal in mental images; the difference between them lies in the fact that in memory the mental picture is accompanied by a consciousness of past experience of the thought or event; in imagination, memory-ideas variously modified, or modified and combined with new elements, form new pictures.

Memory is possible because every thought, act and feeling leaves its mark upon the brain-cells in the path of its discharge; the retention of the memory-images depends upon the permanence of these paths in the brain tissue, and to this extent memory is controlled by physiological conditions.

Undoubtedly the infant's earliest memories are those connected with his feelings of satisfaction or discomfort attendant upon eating, and with the bodily sensations due to contact with his clothing, his comfortable bed, his agreeable bath. From the observations of Preyer, Perez, and others, it may safely be concluded that the first memory-image is one of taste, followed, in order, by images of smell, touch, sight, and hearing.

Types of Memory

Experience has taught us that sensation does not cease at the moment its stimulus ceases to act. Often words that are not apprehended by us when uttered resolve themselves into coherence after the voice has stopped. The same thing is true of the other senses; you can still see the facial expression of the friend who has just left you; the "feel" of the skin of a peach just peeled still causes certain of your muscles to contract unpleasantly. These after-sensations, or after-images, continuing after the sense-stimulus has been withdrawn, are the beginnings of the true mental images which, when revived in consciousness, are called memory-ideas.

The older psychology taught that the mind had different *faculties*, of which memory was one; the modern doctrine is that memory is a function of all the cerebral centers; and so to-day it is customary to speak of motor, of visual, or of auditory memories, according as the images revived or remembered are images of movement, of sight, or of sound. The prevailing types of memories vary with persons; but usually when memory is reproductive (brings back into consciousness objects or events that have been known) instead of being merely verbal, the visual image predominates; accompanied, perhaps, by less distinct auditory, motor, or tactual images. In children from one to five years of age, a period in which memory is largely reproductive, visual, auditory, and motor images are, as a rule, most prominent.

The *memory-tone*, or ascendant type of memory, is an indication of the stage of development attained.

The infant's consciousness is dominated by sense-ideas of taste, smell, and touch; when he begins to crawl about, when the senses of sight and hearing become more active and acute, we shall expect impressions that come to him through these channels, and their images, to remain with him with more or less accuracy and distinctness, as may be determined by attendant conditions.

When True Memory Begins

Very few persons really remember events or feelings experienced before the third or fourth year; usually what we think we remember of that time is what we have been told—our images have taken form from the verbal descriptions of those about us. And this is only natural, for memory-images that lack associations to link them definitely with other experiences, and that lack the distinctness that results from their formulation in words, must become confused or be entirely lost from their close succession and overlapping in consciousness. Sully says, "The third year is epoch-making in the history of memory. It is now that impressions begin to work themselves into the young consciousness so deeply and firmly that they become a part of the permanent stock-in-trade of the mind. The earliest recollections of most of us do not reach back beyond this date, if indeed so far."

Retentiveness

Native retentiveness or tenacity of memory is greater in the early part of life, owing to the greater plasticity of childhood. The tenacious memory of the

kindergarten child holds fast his clear impressions, for which the general activity of the senses at this period is responsible. In the years from five to nine, when girls' activities approach most nearly those of boys, their motor memories show the most marked increase, but diminish with the change to more quiet habits in the years following. In boys the advance is continuous between the years of five and fifteen, with the more pronounced increase occurring in the later years of the period. All children gain in verbal memory as their power to understand and to use words improves; it is probably at its best by the age of thirteen or fourteen.

Recall

Working with children of kindergarten age we find their power of voluntary recall is limited. At three or three-and-a-half years the child will make an effort to remember, but is not always able to do so. Even unusually bright children are often unable to tell back the story immediately after having heard it. Some time is required for its assimilation; perhaps after three or four days the child will spontaneously give a very complete account of facts that he could not recall earlier on demand. This is one reason for the practice of many kindergarten and first grade teachers in the Sunday school, who wait until the following week before asking for the child's expression of the lesson-story, either verbally or by means of any sort of handwork.

Ideas of Time and Space

The inability of the child to localize his images in time and in space adds to their indefiniteness. Words that express duration of time, and words that measure distances, have no meaning until contact with nature has given them content. "They (children) talk about the days as if they were things." To-day, yesterday, and to-morrow are understood dimly, for *now* is the only time that counts in their world of present interests. "A girl of four asked, 'Where is yesterday gone to?' and 'Where will to-morrow come from?'" And another child, after the question, "Mother, how old is Jesus?" had been answered, inquired, "How old was grandma when Jesus was born?" Countless comparisons and adjustments must unconsciously be made by the child before he can begin to appreciate the meaning of the most common time words. A period of years means nothing, because there is nothing in the four-year old's life by which to estimate such a span; the few weeks or days preceding a much-desired event are ages long. Gradually these mysteries are solved. Going to the kindergarten day by day helps to measure off the weeks, and the years that he has spent in school are an aid to the primary child in understanding longer periods of time.

Ideas of locality are somewhat less perplexing to the little learner. Memory tells him where to find the toys he has put away, and helps him recognize the places he has visited; but ideas of distance, like ideas of time, may be very vague even to children in

the primary grades. There is a tendency to localize distant objects near by; on the other hand, a few blocks will seem a long way to short legs that have not often walked so far. The words *In a country far away* will probably be interpreted as the place farthest from home that the child has visited; perhaps *country* will be the one word in the phrase with meaning for him, and so visions of the farm on which he spent a few days of the previous summer will furnish him with a scene for the talk or story that follows.

Imagination

In the child's early imaging the boundary line between memory and imagination is not clearly drawn. Imagination, properly so called, however, is distinguished from memory by its constructive quality. The infant's expressions of desire are a sign of imaginative vigor, which is also seen in the original devices of older children to bring about their own purposes. They show it too in their imitative play when they depart from their models by adapting them to meet original ideas, and in the invention of games and of incidents in their free and uncontrolled play.

Sometimes the child of three or four is so much in the thrall of imagination that he fails to make the proper distinction between the real and the fancied; he lives in a state of half-dreams whose fabric is woven of bits of memory, of present actual facts, and of the unrealities of play. After these earliest fancies are outgrown, the world of make-believe is still a

charming place, and "let's pretend" is frequently heard on the lips of the primary child. Forbush calls the child at this stage "The Young Pretender," and Mrs. Meynell says that children delight to put aside their good sense while they "pretend." "That is their own word. Every child uses it, and every child knows what he means by it. 'Let's pretend,' not 'Let's believe.' Their mother does not put 'Let's pretend' into the child's mouth—she finds it there. Without it there is no play. But the pretending is always drama and never deception or self-deception." The following incident bears out this statement. Two small girls, one four, the other five years old, had been looking at the pictures in a book on natural history. Suddenly both of them uttered little shrieks of mingled alarm and pleased excitement as they scrambled under a couch. When questioned they said they were "playing the alligator in the book is alive and trying to catch us." They were not *actually* afraid, but there was all the excitement arising from the simulated feeling, and the game gave opportunity for the exercise of the dramatic instinct so strong in these years.

No doubt a few children are so matter-of-fact that it is necessary to make an effort to develop imagination in them. But with most of them it is sufficiently strong to vivify even the dullest things; to make out of the merely pleasant idea a picture glowing with color; or, on the other hand, to people the dark stairway or the unlighted room with monsters suggested by the bears and giants and witches of the tales they hear.

Animism

The tendency to invest inanimate objects with life and feeling and to explain the phenomena of nature by attributing personality to them, is common to children and to all primitive peoples, and is another evidence of imaginative activity. Its educational value lies in the fact that it helps bring the child into a sympathetic state of mind with what would otherwise be outside his power to comprehend. Four-year-old Dorothy ascribed her own probable feelings to her old favorite, Doris, when, having deprived the latter of her clothes and put her to bed that she might give all her attention to a new doll, she attempted to justify her conduct by explaining that Doris was sick, and did not care to wear the pretty dress and coat.

The animistic tendency is strongly marked in the kindergarten child, but by the close of the primary period, the causes of thunder and rain are better understood, and practical experience has taught the truth about dolls.

Imagination the Builder of Ideals

Imagination is one of the teacher's strongest allies; it hastens the assimilation of new ideas, develops the sympathetic nature, and enters very largely into the building-up of ideals.

Childish imagination helps dictate the answer to such questions as Whom do our children admire? What qualities of mind and heart appeal to them? What occupations do they wish to follow when they reach the "grown-up" land?

So far as occupations are concerned, children gen-

erally choose one with which they are familiar. The boy between seven and nine is attracted to the trades, and to the life of the farmer, the soldier, or the sailor. The girl of eight or nine wants to be a teacher, a dressmaker, or a housekeeper. The preferences of both girls and boys are often based on liking for the work named, but sometimes they are influenced by the fact that certain occupations are more lucrative than others. The child of four or five wants to be a policeman, a fireman, to drive the grocer's wagon, or to be a motorman on the street-car. One small boy was overheard saying he would be a civil engineer during the week, but a motorman on Sundays and holidays!

Persons Admired

Answers to the question, "What person of whom you have ever heard or read would you most like to resemble?" naturally fall into three classes: parents and acquaintances, those nearest to the child in his first years; historical personages from past and present times; and characters from literature. One investigation showed that almost half the children at seven years of age found their ideals in father and mother, in neighbor and friend; about two-fifths, in literary characters; in the eighth and ninth years there was a falling-off under the headings of father and mother. And these studies generally have served to bring out the fact that children at six and seven years of age most frequently name their parents as their ideals. The percentage of those naming God and Christ is very small, of those naming Bible characters even smaller. As teachers in Sunday-schools

we may well seek the reason for this. Have we done all we could to make the Old Testament characters real to them, and to set before them the Master's beautiful life in such a way that the humanity of Jesus could make its demand upon their better natures? Or have we put too great a barrier between them and Him by dwelling exclusively upon His divinity? Or do the majority of school children know nothing at all about the Heavenly Father and the Son, and the Bible personages that ought to be so full of interest for them?

Qualities Admired

Ask a child in the kindergarten what he can do to please Mother and his answer is, usually, "be good," which means being obedient to her wishes. The reply is the same if you ask what God wishes His little children to do, except that they may add the words "be kind." Their ideals must possess the virtues suggested by these replies; in many cases they are further endowed with marvellous powers and with all the good things of this world. Only as the materialism of early childhood is outgrown does the imagination picture the desirability of the higher and more abstract qualities, such as courage, freedom, wisdom, and truth; and not until the age of fifteen or sixteen do most boys and girls dream of charging on to victory in the larger world of achievement from motives of patriotism and service.

How the Child Thinks

Though thinking involves the same elements in both cases, the adult carries on his train of thoughts

in words supplemented, it may be, by visual or other images; the young child thinks first in images, and later in words, as his vocabulary is acquired. His difficulty in trying to fashion in language the stuff of which his thoughts are made is charmingly expressed in the lines:

“People say to me,
 ‘A penny for your thought!’
And I can’t remember thinking;
 And I should think I ought.
I wasn’t sleeping, either;
 I know that, because
I saw things out of my two eyes:
 I wonder where I was.

“Now I’m back, I see them
 Sitting all around;
And the noise together
 Makes a purring sound.
But I know something more
 Than just awhile ago;
I know something more!—
 I wonder what I know.”

Usually by the end of the third year or at the beginning of the fourth, there is a decided quickening of the intellectual life of the child. A wealth of impressions is coming to him from all sides so rapidly there is hardly time to assimilate even the facts entirely within his comprehension. Unconsciously he compares old and new ideas, and tries to find the connections between them. Curiosity is alive, touching everything from the cat and her kittens to the movements of the heavenly bodies. Imagination and memory are there, the latter to interpret, the former to help with its suggestion that this is a reasonable world

capable of being understood. The first questions, "What is this?" "What is that?" are usually a reaching out for the names of things; for the child instinctively feels that everything has a name for identification and classification. Professor Sully speaks of a boy of three years and nine months who hurled such questions as these at his mother: "What does frogs eat, and mice and birds and butterflies?" and "What does they do?" and "What is their names?" "What is all their houses' names?" "What does they call their streets and places?" He once explained that he thought birds and butterflies and frogs and mice all had names given them by their mothers, as his mother had given him his.

The Causal Idea

Very soon interest strikes deeper in quest of origins and sources. All about him the child sees things in process of construction, from the dough that is being kneaded into loaves by his mother's deft hands to the house being built across the street. But there are other operations he has not seen, so he demands of those about him, "Who makes the birds? the trees? the hills? Who makes the trees grow?"

And then his "Why?"—his insatiable thirst for the causes and uses of things—which is also an example of his practical outlook upon life. Whatever is must not only be the product of a personal agency, but must answer to some need; and the usefulness of things is of such importance that objects are fre-

quently described in terms of their utility—the tree is “To sit under,” or “To make the wind blow.”

It is safe to assume that all children ask “Why?” before the age of three, and show interest in the causal notion before four years old. The causation of natural phenomena comes in for a large share of attention; the attribute of motion in objects appeals very largely, perhaps more generally to boys than to girls; the latter are likely to be much interested in everything about the house. Probably all children are interested in the origin of life and in the causal idea pertaining to religious subjects before the age of seven.

Our Response

The shadow on the wall, the wind, the rain, the sun, animals, other children, the new baby and whence he came, his own body and origin, and the supernatural world—all are subjects for the four-year-old to puzzle over and to dispose of as best he can. Many of his questions are idle, and these should be ignored; but these early years are years of promise when indifference and impatience are fatal to the instinct of investigation, and when a serious question should meet with a sympathetic response from parents and teachers. Ability to reason presupposes trained powers of observation and insight. Ordinarily the little child's deductions are based upon incomplete and indefinite conceptions, and his feelings of the relationships of things are obtained by contrasting non-essential features with those that are intrinsic. The sky was a gorgeous mass of color—“orange and scarlet and purple”—when the little

child said, "The sun is melting." It looked as if it were! And so we must not condemn the childish reasoning as the result of wrong *methods*, but recognize that his immaturity, his inexperience, and his lack of training are responsible for his mistakes.

Unfortunately the first twelve or thirteen years are too often looked upon as years of acquisition exclusively, years whose chief business is the storing-up of useful information; the fact that efficiency depends upon ability to make right choices is ignored. Reason does not spring into being fully developed, as did Minerva. The child should be required to solve such problems as are suited to his capacity and will help him meet the challenge of his daily needs. The practice of the kindergarten teacher who says, "Now, John, look at both chairs carefully, before you sit down, to see which one is the right size for you," is sound and of far more permanent value than that which directs him to a particular chair. When he decides the matter for himself, if his judgment is correct, he grows in self-reliance; if it is wrong, he can be helped to see his error. The habit of parents and of teachers by which all the child's thinking is done for him dwarfs his mentality and his reasoning power.

CHAPTER IV

CHILD NATURE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMOTIONS

THE higher emotional life of man is largely colored by his intellectual and ethical ideals, but the emotional life of the young child knows no such restraints, and expresses itself in feelings far more primitive, more closely interwoven with the instinctive reactions. According to James, both emotions and instincts are impulses from within, the latter to act, the former to feel, "characteristically, when in presence of a certain object in the environment." The reason for the close parallel of these two sorts of tendencies is perhaps to be found in their usefulness in maintaining life; both were necessary to primitive man in his struggle for existence and both are indispensable to-day. The impulse to do, to plunge ahead without forethought of consequences, must often have brought disaster in its train had not protective fear held impulse in check; and the social side of man's nature might have remained forever undeveloped had it not been endowed with the instinct of love.

The Child's Fears

Pain and pleasure, induced entirely by bodily conditions, are the earliest feelings experienced by the

infant, who turns, as naturally as the blossoms to the sun, to the source of his pleasant, comfortable sensations, and as noticeably avoids whatever might make for discomfort as soon as he is able to recognize its causes. Fear is a feeling aroused by the thought that pain or disagreeable things are impending. Its manifestations in children are familiar. The dark, a black dress or hat, a new object or a strange person or sound, and different surroundings may awaken this feeling; sometimes an object moving along without an apparent cause will send a small child into a panic; and fur and feathers are frequently terrifying to the little person. In an apartment house a hall-boy was recently overheard threatening three-year-old Gertrude with the remark, "If you throw those papers in the hall I'll get the feather-duster." This child's fear of feathers was such that the threat to bring them near her was sufficient to deter her from disobedience.

Their Sources

Some childish fears, we are told, are inherited; some are due to imagination and superstition; some are the result of disquieting experience. One of the interesting writers of the day has shown in a recent article that many of the otherwise incomprehensible fears of adults have their root in almost forgotten occurrences dating back to childhood. It is probably true that some of our earliest fears have an instinctive basis; but many others are undoubtedly prompted by the feeling of helplessness or of ignorance that assails one in the presence of superior forces, either of nature or of man. Compayre calls timidity that

“diffuse fear, which paralyzes all the movements of the child three or four years old, and which is, as it were, the residuum of the fears of the first period.” A little timidity is good for children that are trusted to go about alone, but very often we find them unafraid in the presence of things that might prove dangerous, and fearful where there is no cause.

It would seem that under three years of age children are most commonly afraid of things seen and heard; that after this, until the fourteenth year, there is a fairly constant increase in fears due to imagination. Investigations tend to show that fear in children and young persons is practically universal. According to one, girls are more fearful than boys, while another shows a greater variety in the fears of boys than in those of girls, with more due to imagination. It is possible that there may be children entirely without fear at the age of six, but, by all accounts, it is hardly likely.

Imagination and Fear

Fears ascribable to imaginative activity are particularly interesting to teachers of young children, because they are probably most numerous and most evident in the years from five to seven or eight. Pierre Loti, in *The Story of a Child*, writes of his childish fear of the great sea, and other writers—George Sand and Charles Lamb among them—have spoken of their horror of the dark. Very often a foolish or superstitious story leaves an indelible impression upon the plastic mind of the sensitive little

one, and furnishes a background for the terrors of night. In one of his essays, Lamb tells of the tortures he endured as a result of his interest in a picture that seemed to fascinate him. It represented the Witch raising up Samuel, and occurred in an old *History of the Bible*, which he loved to pore over. Rather fortunately for him, one is led to think, he one day tore a page of the beloved volume and it was thereafter put beyond his reach; but the memory of that one picture colored his dreams from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of his life.

"Signs"

Most children are superstitious, attaching peculiar values and powers to a great variety of objects. Such curious beliefs, as that a wish made on seeing the first watermelon of the season, or on seeing a load of hay, will come true, are prevalent among school children; and faith in "lucky stones," so-called, and other fetiches is also usual. Even if they do not fully believe in the efficacy of such *signs*, children yield to the suggestion of the words "See a pin and pick it up, All day long you'll have good luck"—and to others of similar import. The collecting instinct finds plausible psychological explanation in the theory that it is a survival in the child of the savage impulse to collect strange and beautiful things, with the hope that some good will result therefrom. This, it is said, was the belief of our early ancestors, as it is of primitive tribes to-day.

Faults of Little Children

Sully, in his *Studies of Childhood*, speaks of the "raw material of morality," a term embracing anger, envy, cruelty, sympathy, and other childish manifestations of feeling. Generally speaking, the meaning of the word *moral* precludes its use with reference to the acts of the very young child, since it implies a rational choice between selfish instincts and desires, and what is right. Anger, envy, cruelty, all have root in the egoism that is characteristic of the undeveloped child mind. Selfishness shows itself in undisciplined rage that howls and kicks, bites and slaps; in envy and jealousy, when the child demands the toys and caresses being lavished upon another. "The child in these first years," says Sully, "though not yet human in the sense of having rational insight into his wrongdoing, is human in the sense of suffering through consciousness of an injured self. This reflective element is not yet moral; the sense of injury may turn by-and-by into lasting hatred. Yet it holds within itself possibilities of something higher."

Selfishness also appears strong in childish ideas of ownership. Like the savage, who appropriates to his use whatever he can lay his hands upon—as his needs may dictate—only to throw it aside when it has served his purpose, the child feels free to help himself to whatever pleases his fancy. A true appreciation of property rights is not attained by man until he makes things, or works to earn them, and the child will not have a proper respect for the rights of others in this matter until he too has learned something of

the responsibility of ownership. He needs to take care of his own toys, and to suffer the penalty of going without them if he does not handle them properly. One writer says that most children under five, many children under ten, and some between the ages of ten and fifteen years will lie and cheat to get, or to retain possession of, a coveted object.

In answer to the charge of cruelty, frequently brought against them, it may be noted that many of the acts of children under six, which we condemn as cruel, are really acts undertaken in the spirit of investigation with no desire to inflict pain, and with no realization that it is being endured. And in the case of the poor cat and dog, those much-tried play-fellows, very often the roughest handling is only the visible evidence of the child's strong attachment for them.

Lying and Its Causes

One day a girl. (M—) in the third grade of a public school yielded to temptation, and took a pair of much-coveted oversleeves from the desk of another child in the room. They were recognized by their owner, who reported the theft to the teacher. The latter was at first unwilling to credit the evidence of her senses, but finally decided to question M— without implying her suspicions in any way. M— insisted that her mother had bought the material and made the oversleeves, but her manner was not wholly convincing; and, finally, in a burst of tears, she threw her arms about her teacher's knees and begged, "Please don't whip me. Please don't whip me." The teacher, horrified yet pitying the poor little culprit,

spoke to her very earnestly of the consequences of her act and of the lie, both barriers by which she had separated herself from her school-fellows. From this she led the child to think of her relationship to the Heavenly Father whom she had so deeply grieved by her act, and the suggestion was made that if M— felt truly sorry for her fault, and ready to make amends, she should ask God to forgive her. In reply, the little girl fell on her knees.

In this case it would seem that fear of punishment was quite as strong a motive for the lie as was the desire to keep the oversleeves. But fear is not the only incentive to children's lies. In some cases it is an inordinate desire to say something surprising, to excite the wonder or admiration of others. Stevenson urges "that whatever we are to expect at the hands of children, it should not be any peddling exactitude about matters of fact. They walk in a vain show, and among mists and rainbows; they are passionate after dreams and unconcerned about realities; speech is a difficult art not wholly learned; and there is nothing in their own tastes or purposes to teach them what we mean by abstract truthfulness." Notwithstanding that this may be true, especially of children under school age, whose imagination and unreliable memory may lead them to deceive themselves, we cannot permit the child to go on apparently wilfully trying to deceive others, though discretion and tact must rule our efforts to correct him wisely.

Dr. G. Stanley Hall mentions among other causes of lying in young children, (1) the desire to keep secret information considered private—a desire that is perhaps traceable to the early developed ten-

dency in childhood to secretiveness. It is not alarming in young children, but may later account for more serious-looking falsehoods. (2) The susceptibility of children to suggestion. (3) The desire to please, to give the answer they think is wanted, sometimes leads to prevarication. One thing it will be well for all of us to remember in dealing with this fault: we teach more lessons in morality by example than by precept, and if we wish our children to have a strict regard for truth we must be careful that our words and actions do not lie. Richard Whiteing has a chapter on Childhood in his book entitled *Little People* that is very well worth reading in this connection.

Positive Forces: Love and Sympathy

Among the most charming traits in the young child are his love and trustfulness, freely lavished upon those who minister to his welfare and happiness. A selfish sort of love? Possibly, but self-preservation is the first law of nature, and so the first evidences of affection are spent upon those who are our natural allies. Love of parents, of teachers, of friends, of the Heavenly Father, has its deepest roots in the consciousness of benefits received; and out of this love, broadened by sympathy—that vicariousness which enables the individual to place himself in the circumstances of others and to enjoy and to suffer what they enjoy and suffer—grows the larger love commonly called altruism. It must spend itself for others, and so society is a factor necessary to its growth.

Even the baby in arms is capable of feeling sympathy. When the little one has struck with its tiny

fist, or thrown its toys upon the floor in anger, Mother places her hands before her eyes and pretends to cry. The gesture is understood, and usually wins the right response. The child of six or seven that has been carefully trained is surely no less responsive, though his self-absorption and impulsiveness, and sometimes his ignorance, make him appear callous and unfeeling. If we meet him on his own ground, however, making our appeal in terms suited to his understanding, we shall find him anything but hard-hearted, though he may not always react according to our adult standards. One of his most promising traits is his desire to help, an impulse that may be cultivated at home, in the kindergarten and in the school. Unfortunately, children's efforts are not always commensurate with their good intentions, but we must accept the latter in lieu of the former, even if the four-year-old does more damage than good; if the seed-time is neglected there will be no harvest.

Other Traits

The dependence that marked the kindergarten child is gradually displaced by self-reliance as he learns to do things for himself. The competitive spirit is fanned by the individualistic games popular in the primary period, and as the child measures his strength against that of his comrades, he realizes increasingly his personal power. With boys the wish to test this power often vents itself in teasing and in bullying animals and younger children; with girls, in managing—"bossing"—younger brothers and sisters, and little friends. The patronizing and dictator-

ial manner of the girl of eight or nine is very amusing in the girl of five, when she feels responsible for a younger child.

Childish Ideas of Justice

The kindergarten child's sense of justice is a very rudimentary thing, and not much more can be said for that of his brothers in the primary grades. Everything is interpreted in the most literal and concrete and personal way. This is the age of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. At six years very few children look for motives; their verdict, good or bad, is based upon the deed itself. But if kindergarten and primary children cannot make fine decisions regarding ethical questions of right and wrong, they are very quick to detect and to resent anything like favoritism and injustice in home and school rule. They have, too, a great respect for custom, with an utter disregard for law in the abstract. The rules of the games they play are enforced, and are no doubt instrumental in increasing the child's respect for constituted authority; but in these early years commands laid down by parents and teachers are apt to be binding for strictly personal reasons, chiefly because the children desire to please, or fear to disobey.

Child Study versus Knowing Our Children

Has this little survey of child-nature helped in any way to illuminate the individual characteristics and differences of the children committed to our care in the Church school-room? Has it helped us to see that that shy little kitten, Adelaide, always

smiling and never seeming to pay attention, is learning something after all, or is that one of the facts that direct observation and acquaintance with the little girl in her home must teach us? A child-study based on books no doubt yields much useful and valuable general information, but there are deeps in the nature of every child that are peculiar to him as an individual. Therefore, let us not be content until we know the home and day school conditions that surround our children, and have seen them at play as well as within the walls of the church building. Let us disarm the suspicions of the frightened little creature, who "don't like the lady," by calling at her house; perhaps by sending her a pretty card, or a flower in birthday greeting; but at all events let us teach her that we love her. Our interest in these little people counts for nothing unless it is built upon the rock of personal love and sympathy.

CHAPTER V

THE CHILD'S RELIGIOUS NATURE AND THE CURRICULUM

BECAUSE our study has for its particular object the religious education of children, we need to know (1) whether there is anything in human nature generally, and in the child specifically, that indicates an innate religious disposition; (2) Has the child any native interests that will respond to the suggestions of Christian ideals of thought and action?

Universality of Religious Conceptions

A religious belief of some sort appears to be the common heritage of mankind. It is probable that every primitive tribe and people has attempted to explain all that was mysterious and awe-inspiring in nature by ascribing it to the agency of beings endowed with powers above those of men. Many of the world's most ancient and most interesting monuments express the religious ideas and customs of peoples whose very names would hardly be known otherwise; and wherever we may go to-day, whether it be among the Indians of North America, the natives of the South Sea Islands, or to the African deserts, wherever man is—we shall find his fetiches, or his shrines and churches.

Turning to the child, we find our answer in part in his animism, which is the revelation of his sense of oneness and of sympathy with all nature's visible forms. The little girl carrying pebbles about from place to place to afford them a change of scene, and the one that could not bear to let the leaves die upon the ground, have conceptions and feelings akin to those of the poor savage and of the myth-loving Greek, and not unlike those of our great poets, the seers of all times. Like all these, the child sees in the commonest things something to marvel at—the swift-rushing stream, the snowflakes, the twinkling star, excite his wonder and enkindle his interest. To his fresh young eyes nothing is dull or of no account. The person who can fold a piece of paper into a cocked hat or a boat is a wonder-worker to him. Perhaps, unconsciously, he reasons from the boat and the hat that all the world is personally directed and made, perhaps the feeling is entirely instinctive, at any rate, his efforts to find the cause or “causer” of everything that comes under his notice is in effect an impulse that requires for its satisfaction the discovery of a creator, and leads to ready acceptance of what we tell him about the Heavenly Father.

The Child's God

Apparently the child has also a natural belief in immortality, and a feeling that “Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.” He cannot imagine a period prior to his existence. “Mamma, where was I when you were a little girl?”—“Where did the baby come from?”—and his very puzzled demeanor when

brought face to face with death, seem to bear out these statements.

But his ideas of God and of heaven are crude and materialistic. The child under six accepts what we tell him of these subjects; indeed, children under ten years are seldom critical, but our words are always interpreted in the light of narrow childish experience. God is a man with superhuman attributes and powers. One child wanted to know whether there was a "Mrs. God," and someone has told it of himself that, as a child, having difficulty in explaining the Holy Trinity to his satisfaction, he finally construed it to mean a sort of family group in which the Holy Ghost was the mother. Heaven, where God and Jesus live, is visualized as a beautiful home with furnishings similar to those surrounding the child. This is shown in the incident related of a small boy, who replied to his own question, "How does God make lightning?" by saying, "Oh! I know, He just pushes a button." Life in heaven is thought of as presenting the same problems and conditions as life on earth. A little girl about three years old, whose grandfather had died, told her mother she dreamed "Grandpa came down from heaven to have lunch with us, and then went back to Jesus."

Miss Shinn, Professor Sully, and others believe that usually what children of three or four are told of theological matters tends to confuse them; at least, that this is so in the case of the brighter minds that try to systematize and bring their ideas into rational connectedness. There are prominent kinder-

gartners and child-study specialists who consider children under five years of age too young to be sent to Sunday-school; others set the minimum age at four years.

Children's Interest in Stories

The child has certain feelings of values that must be considered in outlining courses of study for the Church School. These feelings for common objects and things seem to be measured by their phases of action, and by their usefulness to the child. Outward appearance, as color and size, also attract him somewhat, and he is interested in certain qualities, as of taste; but purely abstract characteristics appeal to him but slightly before the tenth year.

As to his literary interests, it is quite safe to say that all children like a story, and that their liking for it will be gauged by its conformity to the peculiar capacities and ideals of their own stage of development. The four- or five-year-old is pleased with simple little stories of other children, with fairy-tales and folk-tales, with myths and nature-stories in which trees and birds and beasts talk and act like human beings. With the majority of children these interests are fairly stable throughout the primary period, showing only such modifications as are to be expected from the progressing intelligence of the older child. The three- or four-year-old child probably accepts the fairy-tale as true; the boy or girl of eight or nine likes the story just as much, but he knows it is only a "make-believe." The most marked new interest in the primary period is shown in taste for historical narrative.

Their Interest in the Bible

Dr. Dawson's *Study of Children's Interest in the Bible* is extremely suggestive. His charts show that at eight years of age the majority of both boys and girls prefer the New Testament to the Old. This preference may be due to the fact that it is the source of all the stories centering about the infancy and childhood of Jesus. But even at eight years two-fifths of the boys and less than one-third of the girls like the Old Testament better than the New, and the percentage increases gradually in the following four or five years. The five Bible stories receiving the highest number of votes from children of all ages were from the Old Testament, with the story of Jesus' birth in the sixth place. Other New Testament stories chosen were the parable of The Prodigal Son, The Flight into Egypt, Changing Water into Wine, and The Good Samaritan. The Old Testament favorites, in order, were: The Selling of Joseph, David and Goliath, Daniel and the Assyrian Kings, Moses and Pharaoh's Daughter, The Story of Ruth. Thirteen of the favorite scenes mentioned were from the New Testament, though Daniel in the Lions' Den received the highest number of votes, with the Crucifixion second, and The Birth of Jesus third.

It is probable that the choice of New Testament scenes is due to the children's greater familiarity with these through their frequent reproduction in pictorial art. Of the characters chosen, John the Disciple stands first in their affections, followed by Peter in

the second place and Jesus in the third. Why Jesus is not named first the following quotation from Dr. Dawson attempts to explain:

"I doubt not that Jesus is naturally the most attractive character in the Bible for children of all ages. This study shows that, as a child, He is more often chosen by the younger children than is any other character. It seems to me probable that this preference would continue among older children if the latter were allowed spontaneously to grow into an appreciation of the adult Jesus. But religious teachers are usually so anxious to present Jesus to children as a divine person, and children's minds are so unable to grasp the mystical implications of this dogma, that the human Jesus is taken away from them and the divine Jesus is made an intellectual abstraction. The result is that the child can love neither the one nor the other."

We may conclude that the Bible stories most interesting to children of kindergarten and primary age are, from the New Testament, those that recount the birth and childhood of Jesus; from the Old Testament, the stories of Joseph, David, Daniel, Moses, the Calling of Samuel, and others relating to the childhood and youth of the characters presented in its pages.

The Aim of Sunday-school Teaching

In selecting the subject-matter of instruction for the Sunday-school, our choice will be determined by our aim as teachers. Those who believe that the object of Sunday-school teaching is simple morality

may hold that sacred literature offers little advantage over profane; those whose one idea is to teach the Bible will insist upon the memorization of portions of Scripture, of the names of the Old and New Testament books, and of various other related facts; where the motive is to teach Church doctrines and history these subjects will be emphasized. But the real object of the Sunday-school is far more comprehensive, introducing all these elements in their proper place, while looking forward to a universal need—that of training the child's affections and will equally with his intellect. Not nature study, not the indoctrination of these little people, is its goal, but to give to every child a religious outlook upon all life, and to lead him to react religiously to every stimulus of his environment.

Teaching the Fatherhood of God

With this ideal, the nucleus of the primary curriculum will be most fittingly drawn from the Bible, and to this may be added material from secular literature and history, from studies in nature, and from other sources, by adapting and giving to it the proper ethical and religious interpretation. The natural setting for the child is the home; throughout kindergarten and primary years its influence is dominant, and father and mother are the highest authorities. The home relations, with their privileges and duties, typify that more spiritual relation between the Heavenly Father and His children. These early years are therefore the most opportune time for teaching the Fatherhood of God and His care for all

creatures, including the animal world. To such presentations the child's parental instincts and sympathy make response.

Instruction Material for the Kindergarten

The child in the kindergarten needs a knowledge of nature, not in its scientific aspect so much, but as the handiwork of God, and as the manifestation of His creative activity. Some of the instruction-material for this purpose may be derived from the courses of study in corresponding grades in the public school, but will need to be presented with the stress on its deeper, more religious significance. As parents nurture them, by analogy children may be taught, through the medium of Old and New Testament stories, God's providence for all man's wants. These too will often furnish the most fitting background for simple lessons in obedience, truthfulness, sympathy, and courage. Stories of some modern babies, as in India and in China, whose lives are saved by missionaries in ways not less wonderful, perhaps, than that by which Moses was preserved to his people, also may be employed. The beautiful story of Jesus' Birth—including the Visit of the Wise Men and the Flight into Egypt—and the Easter story should be presented each year in their proper season, omitting, of course, all the harrowing details of the Crucifixion.

Subjects Suitable for the Primary Department

In the primary grades the acquaintance of many more great Bible characters will be made, each one stepping out into the child's intense imagination with

a real, personal message of God's special care and guidance. No doubt there will be repetitions, but the familiar story retold from a slightly different point of view, to adapt it to the child's changing and developing needs, gains in force. The riches of those old wonder-tales, like the story of Gideon and his three hundred picked men, and of Moses and the Burning Bush, for example, worn down to their gem-like perfection through endless repetition by one generation after another, are not to be exhausted in one telling to a child six or seven years of age. Toward the close of the primary period, when the child is beginning to form stronger attachments outside the home circle, the life of Jesus in the more personal relations of Friend and Pattern and Helper will be suitable material. The lives of the early saints, and of the great missionaries of our own times, may profitably be introduced here to satisfy the growing desire for biography and history. But whatever the subject may be, whatever the source of the story, there must be a real connection between it and the life of the child—some point at which it touches his personality and vitalizes it.

The Topical Arrangement of Stories

Because instruction must be definite and concrete in these first years, because the child's ideas of space and of time relations are extremely limited, it is recommended that lesson systems follow the topical plan, by which groups of stories are arranged about certain topics, all related to a central theme, the underlying thought for the year. Where the instruc-

tion-material is properly graded and classified to cover the work of the entire school course, these central themes will be found to be progressively different from year to year, thus insuring a unified curriculum with appropriate lessons for each grade, and no time wasted in useless repetition. In the kindergarten particularly, the choice of topics may show some connection with seasonal changes, and both here and in the primary grades, when possible, the more important Church fasts and feasts should govern it. In many cases, unless this be done, the religious significance of Christmas and Thanksgiving will be entirely overshadowed by their celebration in the home; Thanksgiving will mean nothing more than a big turkey with the usual embellishments, and Christmas joy will be measured by the number of gifts received.

Suggestions from Various Sources

The arrangement of lessons under topical heads places the stress upon one particular subject for a number of weeks, and thereby helps to fix the lesson-thought. One kindergarten text-book offers for the Advent season a series of four stories on Generosity, in the following order: The Little Evergreen Tree; The Coat of Many Colors; The Baby King; The Poor Woman's Pennies. All are permeated by the thought that love is shown in giving, and that joy and real happiness follow the giver. Another text has for the Christmas season (for the second year kindergarten) the topic, "Thanksgiving for God's Best Gift," with the stories—An Angel's Message,

The Story of the Baby Jesus, The Visit of the Wise Men; and, in review, Stories about the Baby Jesus Retold.

Probably the most satisfactory study of topics would result from a comparison of outlines of various courses of study and lesson systems for the departments under consideration. Among these may profitably be included Cushman's *Bible Lessons for Little Beginners*, Palmer's *One Year of Sunday School Lessons for Young Children*, detailed outlines of the *International Graded Sunday School Lessons*, and Professor Pease's *Outline of a Bible School Curriculum*. Professor Pease takes a very decided stand in suggesting for the kindergarten grades, almost exclusively, lessons in nature study based on the Scriptures. In both the first and second years allowance is made for the Christmas and Easter stories, each to be given in its proper season. The outline for the primary grades has for its general subject God the Loving Father and His children, with the theme, God the Loving Father providing for His children's needs, for the first year primary; God the Loving Father providing wise laws for His children, for the second year; and God the Father, providing guidance and help for His children, through Jesus, the Friend of all, for the third year. The grade subjects are naturally subdivided into various topics, each covering several lessons. In the third grade one whole topic, The Friend teaching about happiness, is a study of the Beatitudes, and concludes with their memorization in the review lesson.

CHAPTER VI

THE QUEST OF A TEXTBOOK

Types of Textbooks

A GLANCE at the long shelf of books recently produced for use in kindergarten and primary grades of the Sunday-school indicates that the old type of Biblical, doctrinal, and missionary catechisms, with their dry questions and drier answers—enlivened, it may be, by a few crude illustrations—has been almost entirely displaced by a new type of book more in accord with the teachings of Psychology and Child Study. We find these new books taking into account more and more the child's native interests and needs, and attempting to supply them with material suitable for the purpose, and appropriate for use in the Church School. For children from three to six years old very attractive series of lessons based on kindergarten principles are to be found; for the child of six, seven, or eight years of age there are beautifully illustrated leaflets, or folders, carefully graded on the same basis that obtains in our best day-schools. The use of the modern book in all the best and most progressive schools is sufficient proof of its welcome. A niche will always remain for the doctrinal catechism, which ministers to a unique purpose; but its facts will be taught young children ob-

jectively as far as possible, while the set questions and answers that are the concise statements of these facts will be reserved for memoriter work later on.

Underlying Principle of the Modern Textbook

A few good books of the catechetical type have appeared recently, but, speaking broadly, the best modern textbooks are based upon the "Heuristic" or source method, which sends students to the original sources of information and knowledge, whether these be books, the workshop, or the world of nature about us, the aim being acquaintance with facts at first hand, and personal experiencing of them by the child himself wherever and whenever practicable. In some cases the textbook offers little more than outlines that are to be expanded by the teacher. All source-books, whether they be intended for the use of teacher or of pupils, demand work from those using them, in recognition of the principle that growth and development are conditioned by self-activity and responsiveness.

Its Application to the Sunday School Kindergarten

It is usual to think of the textbook as the spring from which the child is to draw his supply of facts of geography, arithmetic, grammar, and—in this case—of the Bible and of religion. Even if this idea were entirely correct where older children are concerned, it would not be tenable with reference to the child of the kindergarten, and to a limited extent only with reference to the primary boy and girl. Chil-

dren under eight or nine years of age are seldom fitted to do much independent work in the preparation of lessons. For this reason some of the books designed for these grades are planned for the teacher's use exclusively. They generally contain, with the story to be told, suggestions as to its effective telling, some suitable illustrations, little hymns and prayers, and outlines for related handwork. Other systems of lessons not only supply all this material and much more for the teacher in a splendid manual, but furnish the child with a parallel series of folders to be given out singly after each lesson has been taught. Here is the morning's story retold, for mother to read aloud, the pretty little song or memory verse, the appropriate picture that may be colored at home, with, sometimes, space for freehand drawing, or for writing or printing the lesson-thought or text. All these devices clinch the lesson taught, and are a link between school and home if properly utilized. They deepen the child's interest, and may arouse that of the negligent parent. Even the youngest child likes to take home the lesson-leaflet, a mounted picture, or a picture-lesson card with its questions on the back.

Difficulties in the Way of Making a Choice

The number of textbooks for the kindergarten and primary grades of the Church School is constantly growing. Some are written by teachers whose success with their own classes, reinforced by the admiring pressure of friends, has led them to give their ideas to the public; occasionally, in such cases, one is forced to the conclusion that it is the personality

of the teacher, rather than anything she has been able to set down in writing, that is responsible for her success. Some of the books are built upon a mistaken conception of the requirements; some of them are so full of specific directions that they could fit only the particular set of circumstances that molded them. If the intellectual and social environment of our children differs from that of the children for whom the book was originally written, we cannot use it without modification.

Suggestion Not Prescription

The teacher's manual should be suggestive and inspirational, not prescriptive. The barest outline in the hands of a skilful teacher is productive of better results than the most elaborately worked-out lesson-plan could be when used by an untrained person lacking insight and understanding. For the person who has skill the most generally helpful book is the one that leaves much to her imagination and discretion. Such a book presupposes a teacher who loves her children and wishes to obey the command, "Feed My lambs"; it presupposes a teacher not only willing but eager to avail herself of every opportunity to add to her knowledge of pedagogy and child-nature, and to improve her methods. So long as all teachers of beginners and of primary grades are not fully trained, there will, however, be a demand for the manual that is not only suggestive but enters intimately into the details of the programme, without exacting iron-bound adherence to it.

A Few Tests To Be Met

A wise selection is possible only as our idea of the essentials of a good textbook is clear and correct. Remembering that child-nature does not vary with the creed of the parents, the following test questions may be applied, no matter what the denomination of those who may use them.

1. What is the intention of this book?

A careful reading of the Preface and Introduction will lead very quickly and surely to an understanding of the author's aim, and to the ideals underlying his work. A study of a few of the lessons should tell us whether that aim is likely to be realized by their use.

2. Is the subject-matter of the book suited to the age and mental attainments of the child that is to receive it? Corned beef and cabbage are not fed to infants, because they are physically unable to digest these foods; similarly, discretion must be used in selecting food for their mental and spiritual assimilation.

3. Is it based on sound pedagogical principles? Is it planned to meet the interests and higher needs of the child through recognition of the stage of development already attained by him? In short, is it concrete, direct, simple, and does it provide for the outlet of the child's activity? Does it state conclusions for the child, or does it present truth in such a manner that he is bound to reach these conclusions through his own mental and emotional activity?

4. Will it fit in with the lessons that have gone before, and with those that shall follow as an integral part of the unified whole?

5. Is it in accord with the spirit of the Church's teaching? Does it present spiritual truths reverently, and will its use encourage the growth of the spirit of reverence and Christian faith and worship in the little people for whose nurture it is intended?

6. Does it provide a leaflet or picture card to be taken home by the child? If so, are the pictures clear, distinct, and artistic, and, above all, suitable? The picture illustrating the Sunday-school lesson ought to be more inspirational in tone than are those appearing in the every day story-book; besides, even the small child appreciates real art whenever its subject is within his comprehension.

Handwork and Games

There is hardly a new book for these lowest grades but acknowledges the necessity for activity on the part of the child, and attempts to meet it by the insertion of finger-plays, games, and motion-songs, and by requiring certain forms of handwork to be done. Because many teachers are limited in resources from which to draw such exercises, it is important that the book selected shall contain some that may be fittingly introduced into the Sunday-school work.

The Teacher's "Helps"

Lastly, what is to be said for the manual from the standpoint of the teacher's personal needs? Is the help it affords really encouraging to the highest effort on her part, or does it bring about mechanical and routine work? For a good general principle it

is safe to say: Shun the book that does all your thinking for you; embrace the one that makes you work. The best textbook from this point of view is the one that rouses the most thought, that drives us to the study, not only of particular lessons, but to the study of our own mental forces and those of our children. From application of this sort will come insight enabling us to question and to teach. Eventually the textbook ought to become to us simply as the river-banks that keep the stream within its proper channel.

No "Perfect" Textbook

The ideal textbook has not been written—never will be written if we mean by *ideal* one that can be used in all schools, and under all circumstances, without subjecting it to any changes. And this is true because the most carefully planned books are necessarily made to meet the average needs of the average class, instead of the individual needs of its members. In every school, in nearly every class, there will be some condition found that is peculiar to itself, and for this reason any book will require modification and adaptation at the hands of that kindergarten or primary teacher who is alert to seize every incident of the class-hour that may be a favorable lever by which to press home a worthy lesson.

CHAPTER VII

METHODS OF TEACHING

The Opening Circle

MOTHER, is it Sunday now?" asks a four-year-old as soon as he awakes. At his mother's affirmative the child springs from his bed. Half-past nine finds him one of the circle of happy-faced children in the Church School Kindergarten. Beside him sits his five-year-old sister, always alert lest he be guilty of some misdemeanor mighty in her eyes. Across from him is tiny Anita of Italian parentage, unable to speak a word of English. She has brought with her a six-inch rule and some books strapped together: it does no violence to her feelings of propriety that one is an advertising pamphlet, the other a child's book of rhymes. The other children represent homes of various nationalities and varying degrees of comfort and culture, but all the little people are alike in at least one respect—they are smiling and expectant. As the soft strains of Mendelssohn's Spring Song merge into the morning hymn the influence of the music is felt, and every child is ready to rise at the opening chord, and sing the simple words of greeting.

What is the secret of so much pleasurable anticipation? In a measure it is due, no doubt, to the

excitement of going to Sunday-school dressed in spick and span best clothes, heightened by the bright room with its pictures and music, and by the presence of cheerful teachers. But such merely external considerations would not be sufficient to keep the child happy throughout the session; the real reason is one that touches his inner self, and has its origin in those activities and in that atmosphere of the schoolroom which reflects the highest aim of both school and teachers—the desire to bring to each child a sense of the Father's love, and an appreciation of the beauty of goodness, and to guide him into a life that shall be expressive of his feeling of kinship with God.

Real Function of Sunday-school Teaching

It is not sufficient to be able to keep a class in order, nor to keep it amused, nor to pour into the child-mind a mass of facts of Biblical history or literature. The real purpose of the Sunday-school is the formation of Christian character; in other words, it aims to habituate the child to certain right reactions; and its domain embraces the moral and spiritual natures of the individual. Moral education leads him by a natural process of growth to substitute higher aims of conduct for the "pressure of desire," and lifts the cause of his actions from a purely personal and selfish motive to one that concedes the rights and considers the happiness of others, accomplishing this end by the development of his sympathies through recognition that others have the same feelings of pain and pleasure to which he is subject; but the province of religious instruction is

to take man entirely out of himself, to point his way to the feet of the Master, and to establish him in habits of praise and of self-denying service.

Self-Activity the Key-Note of Modern Methods

In a narrow sense it may be said that every teacher's method is, like his personality, a distinctly private possession, that can no more be shared with others than can his eyes, or his sense of humor; in a wider meaning—that in which it is used here—it refers to the teacher's general plan of organizing her material, and of manipulating the child's environment in order to bring about the desired sort of mental activity; to her order of procedure, and to the means or instruments of her technique.

How is the lesson material as embodied in the story and in the various school activities to be transformed into a vital, energizing part of the mental, moral, and spiritual fibre of the child's life? Certainly not by any pouring-in process that would make of the teacher a fountain of wisdom, and of the children passive little pitchers waiting to be filled; for education is a process of growth to which responsiveness and self-activity are essential.

The Houses of Childhood

Madame Montessori lays great stress upon the importance of the spontaneous activities of children, and, in *The Houses of Childhood*, insists upon their having their liberty limited only by the rights of others, and by the customs that prevail among persons of refinement and good breeding.

Much of the material designed by her is intended for the formal and thorough training of the senses; some of it leads directly to the mastery of reading and writing, and to number work; and there is special apparatus for physical training. At first each child works alone, seated on a rug or at his little table; later he joins the others in certain collective exercises. By preparing the environment so that the child may be allowed perfect freedom—except to engage in what might be useless or harmful—it is hoped that he will attain that complete mastery of self that shall enable him to control and to subordinate his actions to the demands of his higher nature. With such ideals and methods it becomes the teacher's duty to watch the child's manifestations with scientific curiosity, rather than actively to lead him. "Life acts of itself," and "Needless help is an actual hindrance to the development of natural forces," are two articles of Dr. Montessori's pedagogical creed.

The Froebelian Method

The kindergarten, based on Froebel's wonderful philosophy of child-nature and child-nurture, is an established fact in our modern educational system. Here, too, the spontaneous activity of the child is seized upon and, in the various occupations, dramatic games, marching, and other customary employments, directed into educative channels; for Froebel believed that the child needs guidance as well as opportunity to follow the leading of his innate ideas and impulses. All the children in the class will be found doing substantially the same thing at the same

time, and the programme is broken up into comparatively short periods. The social impulse is animated, and models of right conduct are held up in the plays and games, of which many are but the simple imitative plays of childhood expressed in verse and set to music. By these agencies, and through the story, the child becomes familiar with good English, his sympathies are cultivated and extended, and his imagination is stirred to emulate what is good and lovely.

Kindergarten "Playthings"

The occupations and gifts have an intellectual value for the child, and are factors in moral training; for example, take the building gifts, whose correct use will not only inspire in him a proper respect for his materials, but will intensify his dawning perception of the principle of continuity, of cause and effect, as one form grows out of another through the shifting of a cube here or of a brick there. In the occupations he learns that his acts have a certain finality: because a paper carelessly folded will always bear a scar, even if the fault can be partially corrected, the child gradually learns the need for greater care and thoughtfulness. At the same time the love of color and of harmony, the sense of beauty, and the desire to create—to give form to his original ideas—are encouraged and gratified.

In both the educational systems named the use of music as a cultural influence is recognized, and nature study, including the care of animal pets and outdoor work in gardens, where possible, is insisted upon.

"Psychologizing" Sunday-school Methods

Attention has been directed to a few of the more striking characteristics of these methods because we believe that certain of their fundamental principles need to be applied to Sunday-school teaching to insure success.

Froebel said, "From object to picture, from picture to symbol, from symbols to thoughts, leads the ladder of knowledge." In the teaching of morals and religion there must be a similar progression from the concrete to the abstract. In every possible way the truths we wish to teach the child must be brought to his consciousness through personal experience of things and events in which they are inherent.

The Instruments of Technique

To what extent the kindergarten's "tools" may be used in the Sunday-school is an open question with many teachers. Every one freely admits the usefulness and appropriateness of the song, the circle talk, and the story; but not all are willing to introduce games, gifts, and occupations. It is obviously true of the games, as it is of the songs and stories, that only a limited number of those used in the week-day kindergarten will exactly meet the requirements of the Sunday-school, since the latter confines itself more particularly to the teaching and application of spiritual truth; but the kindergarten ideal embraces the spiritual side of child-nature, and has it in mind continually, quite as the Sunday-school ideal takes account of its physical and mental aspects; and so, whenever we can stress an ethical or religious prin-

ciple by representing it symbolically in a play or game, it is right to do so. This is teaching by one kind of analogy, just as the story teaches by another kind. A kindergarten occupation, introduced for the purpose of establishing or strengthening connections between the thought of the lesson and the childish consciousness of it, is another legitimate Sunday-school activity.

Objective Methods of Teaching in the Primary Grades

It has been said more than once that no sharp distinctions can be drawn between children of kindergarten and primary ages. At six the child does not lay off one set of impulses, interests, and intellectual capacities as a garment, to don a new set ready-made that will serve him during the primary period, so-called. On the contrary, he may be said to modulate from the key of impulse to the key of imitation by a gradual and steady development; his interests expand by degrees, and his mental powers increase by almost imperceptible stages, through the free interaction of inner and outer forces. Consequently the teacher must harmonize her methods with these facts. The child of seven or eight years, like the child of four, demands the opportunity to learn through direct personal contact with things; and by experiencing the feelings we wish him to have he must be moved to translate his better impulses into the worthy deeds we desire him to perform.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TEACHER'S GENERAL PREPAREDNESS

The Importance of Sunday-school Teaching

THE following quotation from the Handbook of the Church (Sunday) Schools of Berkeley, California, is worthy of remark:

"Service of Admission. New teachers are admitted from time to time to full membership in the Teachers' Association and on the staff by a special brief Service of Admission."

Such a service naturally emphasizes the importance and the significance of teaching in the Sunday-school, and is a fitting first step toward its responsibilities and privileges. It should sober the most thoughtless one of us, and lead us to inquire into our motives to make sure that a real desire to enter the Master's service is their mainspring, and it has another aspect in that it implies a right spiritual attitude on the part of the teacher, arising from a consciousness of God and from the sense of the soul's dependence upon Him. This consciousness is a subtle and far-reaching source of power, but needs to be fed by prayer and by contemplation of the higher things of the spirit. The beautiful picture of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane carries a special message to every one engaged in the work of training the young; no study

should be undertaken, no attempt be made to teach a lesson, without first uttering a prayer for divine help and guidance.

Qualifications Necessary to Success

Meditation and prayer alone, however, do not necessarily make efficient teachers; a liberal fund of general information, to which is added a knowledge of child-nature, a thorough understanding of and sympathy with the best educational ideals and methods, and a willingness to give freely of one's time for the preparation of the lessons to be taught, are quite as essential. Kate Douglas Wiggin holds the standard high when she says that the ideal kindergarten should have the "Music of Saint Cecelia, the art of Raphael, the dramatic genius of Rachel, the administrative ability of Cromwell, the wisdom of Solomon, the meekness of Moses, the patience of Job, the prudence of Franklin, the inventive power of Edison, the talent of improvisation of the early Troubadours"; and the ambitious primary teacher will agree that the demands upon her capacities are little less exacting. Be not discouraged: here, as elsewhere, painstaking effort, labor, and self-denial contribute largely to success.

A Few Essentials of Personality

We carry with us into the schoolroom a great many echoes of our life outside. It is impossible to measure out a portion of self saying, "This part of me teaches," for it is undeniably true that every part of our being, every thought and feeling, every ex-

perience, contributes to our usefulness in the work or detracts from it. After a very pleasant morning in a Sunday-school that ranks high, the writer was surprised to hear the teacher in charge say apologetically that she did not feel satisfied with her conduct of the session, assigning as the cause the fact that she was not properly rested. How few of us take into consideration the demands of the Sunday-school hour when we make our plans for Saturday evening!

Health, temperament, general fitness, maturity, our love for children—are all factors that must be taken into account. Maturity refers not to the number of one's years so much as to the capacity for understanding, and to the possession of a proper perspective. Culture, by which is meant refinement of morals, tastes, and manners, is decidedly a requisite; a cheerful and happy disposition, a broadly charitable outlook upon life, unselfishness in a marked degree, are other equally important characteristics. What one writer calls the teacher's vicariousness, his ability and his willingness, that is, to put himself in his pupil's place, is another. It is really sympathy and imagination and the power to efface self, and without it we can never hope to bridge the gulf between childhood and maturity, nor to find the most effective ways of approaching the inner life of the child.

Avoiding the Ruts

We have all been surprised at times to discover how different some familiar object or act appears when seen from a new point of view. It is human nature to get into a rut, to become narrow and self-

satisfied, unless we train ourselves to look beyond the little limits of our daily lives and interests for suggestions and criticism. And so it is a good plan to have always at hand an authoritative book, germane to one's work, into which we may dip frequently and deeply; but better still, if there is a teacher's training-class, to go into it with enthusiasm and vim for the sake of the opportunities it offers for increased knowledge, and for intercourse with persons whose ideals and aims are like our own. If there is no training-class, small groups of teachers often find it worth while to meet at certain intervals for the purpose of reading and discussing some such book as Froebel's *Education of Man*, or a standard work on psychology or pedagogy. Visiting other schools and classes is also fruitful of good in more ways than one, since it enables us to see what other teachers are doing and to compare their methods with our own. Sometimes a teacher is totally unconscious of her own errors or faulty ways of doing things until she sees another making the same mistakes. The necessary condition to all progress is an open and fair mind, free from any tendency to find fault gratuitously, but equipped to distinguish between good and poor practice. It is interesting to know that in the Union School of Religion, Union Theological Seminary, New York City, it is the custom for entire classes to visit certain other classes at regular intervals. Evidently the belief prevails here that not only teachers, but the children as well, are benefited by such intercourse.

CHAPTER IX

PREPARATION OF THE PARTICULAR LESSON

The Time

EVERY one must have noticed how events conspire against the person who recklessly puts off for to-morrow what should be done to-day: at the last moment something almost invariably comes up to upset his plans. And though there are conscientious teachers who habitually devote Saturday evening to the study of the next day's lesson (some less conscientious leave this duty for Sunday morning), the custom is seldom a wise one. Often when it is too late, the discovery is made that a much-needed book of reference is lacking; or a neighbor drops in and the preparation is at best nothing more than a hurried reading. Adequate preparation implies a full acquaintance with the aim and end of the entire series of lessons. In the well-thought-out course of study there is a reason for the order in which the various topics occur, and for the sequence of the individual lessons, and each has some bearing upon those that precede and follow it. It is well, therefore, to read over the new lesson at least a week or two in advance, to let its truths sink deep into consciousness, and to give the needed time for collateral reading and the working-up of anything obscure or

unusual. The number of good ideas that come unbidden when we set to work long enough ahead of time, is surprising: the subconscious mind seems to do the work for us better than we can do it consciously when in a hurry.

The Programme as a Whole

The new story or instruction-material is to be considered with reference to the entire programme. No moment of the Sunday-school period is without its influence for good, and for this reason every step in the schedule requires forethought. The hour should be bright and happy, since "joy is the favorable climate of childhood"; there should be opportunity for a little contemplation of nature, because it is in His manifestations in the natural world that the little one first sees the hand of God, and from this aspect the astronomical year is as important as the Christian year. Let the child's eyes open to the beauty of the "works of the Lord," that with them he may "magnify and praise Him forever." As it is difficult to hold the attention of the young child for long, the kindergarten teacher must discover or invent rhythmic exercises, appropriate games, finger-plays, to satisfy the need for diversity and relaxation. In the primary department such exercises are less necessary, though there may be times when a motion-song or a march will be just what is needed to stimulate the desired spirit of enthusiasm, or to clear the mental atmosphere. The element of worship also must be provided for, and to this end suitable prayers and hymns must be found. The song that fitted last Sun-

day's lesson perfectly may not do at all for the one following; especially if there has been a change from one theme to another. For the sake of unity and harmony all parts of the programme must articulate perfectly—circle talk, song, game, story, Bible verse, and prayer—not one of which is to be given undue prominence, or to be used for its own sake, but only because it is another avenue by which the day's teaching may be brought home to the mind of the child. Quite as essential as this quality of definiteness—and existing without any sacrifice of the latter—is the characteristic of *elasticity*, which makes possible the utilization of unexpected occurrences, and of the chance remarks of the children to heighten the effectiveness of the teaching. In this, as in other things, the teacher's measure of success is in proportion to her general alertness and preparedness.

Steps in Teaching

When working up a lesson it is wise to keep in mind the several well-defined steps by which the child is led from what he already knows to that which is new, and back again to the old, by which the two elements are compared, and the application is fixed. These steps are usually considered under the following names and in the order given: Preparation, Presentation, Association or Correlation, Generalization, and Application. The purpose of the first step is to make ready the mind for the reception of the new material that will be given in step two, and it must bring before the consciousness that old knowledge or experience which will serve as a bridge to the new.

A pertinent question is not infrequently sufficient to stir dormant memories and to point the way of the child's mental activity; on the other hand, it may require many questions, the definition of new and difficult words, or the description of a peculiar custom or tradition. Many dull hours in Sunday-school and in the day-school must be charged up to the omission of this very important part of the teacher's work.

The term Presentation explains itself; Association and Correlation fix the new in the memory by combining it with as many old facts as possible, and in as many ways; Generalization follows, reviewing all the related facts, and ending with a statement of the general truth underlying them. Application is essential whether the lesson be one in science or morality, and in the teaching of religion will often be felt rather than expressed in words, for here we are dealing with souls, which are less tangible than the unknown quantities, x , y , and z .

How To Present the Lesson

There are various ways of communicating knowledge in the schoolroom, the choice depending upon the age and the stage of mental development of the persons to be taught. The adult attends a lecture, makes notes on what he hears, and supplements the latter by extensive collateral reading; in the subjects of literature and history (which are the basis of Sunday-school teaching in the first years), the high-school student is assigned a lesson in a specified textbook, and is expected to come to his class prepared to recite what he has learned. But neither of these

methods is possible with the young child, who reads perhaps with difficulty and is just learning to study things out for himself. With children of this age the body of the new lesson may be "developed" through skilful questioning that will send their thoughts inward, testing memory, and outward to nature and to their books, and to every other source for the proper answers. Teaching in this way requires a high degree of skill on the part of the teacher, and on the part of the taught a fairly extensive fund of related information or facts.

The Story

Under six years this intellectual equipment is almost entirely lacking; the little kindergartner lives so wholly in the world of feeling that his emotions afford the best leverage for reaching his inner life; the primary boy and girl are in a transitional state that leans very heavily toward the emotional. For this reason, in the kindergarten always, and in the primary grades for the most part, the story is preëminently the medium for Sunday-school teaching. Occasionally the primary teacher may develop parts of the story, but this ordinarily spoils it as a story and robs it of some of its effect. "Cleanliness is next to godliness," "Honesty is the best policy," and other similar maxims, fall upon the deaf ears of the four-year-old and of the eight-year-old. If you would teach them to be clean and neat, rather tell them the story *Finding a Brother*—that story of a little boy who was happier dirty than clean until he found that the pig alone of all the animals would have him

for brother, unless he was willing to wash his hands and face. Such a story will do more good than any number of abstract maxims. To tell your boy he should be ashamed of himself for fearing the dark will not make him one whit braver, but repeat to him the story of the child Samuel, for instance, and the seed of a greater courage will have been planted. The child unconsciously puts himself in the hero's place, and for having felt bigger and stronger under the stimulus of your words he will be better able to cope with his fears when next they assail him.

The preparation of the lesson for kindergarten and primary grades, then, generally includes working up a story. While the fundamental principles of storytelling do not vary, our treatment of material and our choice of themes must be adapted to the age and understanding of the children that are to hear the stories. It is worth remembering, too, that the child under seven or eight years of age enjoys the repetition of an old story many times over. Two or three years later he demands greater variety in his literary diet.

The Teacher's Perspective

Let us consider the story of Daniel in the lion's den. The sixth chapter of the Book of Daniel, verses one to twenty-six, is the source. We read these verses through once to get the story, and then to get the proper perspective, and to refresh our memory of what has gone before we begin at the first verse of the Book of Daniel, and read with the same zest that would accompany the perusal of any other wonderfully interesting tale of the long ago. It may be set

down as a rule that the first reading of a new lesson should be for the purpose of gaining a broad general idea; later readings and study will help fix in the mind all the picturesque and extraordinary details. To increase the fund of mental pictures, pore over every good source book available; root around in your History of the Hebrews; know something about the Persians as a people; realize the significance of the expression "the law of the Medes and the Persians, which altereth not," and all the acquired facts will contribute toward a vivid presentation of the story, though you may not mention one of them. We need never fear knowing too much on any subject.

It is said to be impossible to teach the whole or even the half of what one knows; to a class of young children it would be inadvisable, to say the least, to tell a quarter of what the teacher ought to know about Daniel and his times if she would make her story live before the eyes of her hearers. An apposite bit of description may be the only product of considerable research, but that one word or phrase may be to your story what the master-stroke of the artist's brush is to his picture. A certain version of the story of Belshazzar's Feast is recalled. The introduction was a remarkable word-picture that reared the magnificent banquet-hall before one's very eyes. But when the narrator spoke of the pale-faced boys who, in fear and trembling, served the feast from the gold and silver vessels of which their house of God had been despoiled, all the splendor of rich stuff and noble carvings, of jewels and of masses of flow-

ers, seemed to fall into their proper place with the high light on the horror-stricken faces of the young Jews and on the walls bared for the mystic writing.

Gaining Insight

Other results of this wider knowledge are the teacher's better conception of the moral issues involved, the acquisition of a certain mental attitude, and the ability to feel the atmosphere of the times and conditions surrounding the hero. Only when that sympathetic viewpoint has been attained can we hope to make the king, Daniel, and the plotters into as vivid a word-picture for the children as did the author of the Book of Daniel for us; then they, too, will grasp, as we have done, the idea that God cares for His obedient children, and they will be inspired by the example of courage presented to them. They do not require that these truths be stated specifically, for they are quick to feel what may be intimated only by a carefully modulated tone. One Sunday after the story of the Creation had been told, in which God was spoken of as a kind king and Adam and Eve were designated as His children, a little girl pointed to the Holman Hunt picture, *The Light of the World*, and asked in a hushed voice, "Is that a picture of the kind king?"

"Hidden Pictures"

Having carefully read the Bible narrative, search out any hidden meanings of word or figure it may contain. The Scriptures are full of pictures invisible

to the Western mind until the eyes have been opened to them by travel in the modern Oriental countries, or by extensive reading on the subject of their manners and customs. Expressions such as "Cast your burden on the Lord," and "Eased my shoulder," are without much content until one is reminded that express companies are a modern institution, still practically unknown in the East, and that the porter was the chief transfer company of Biblical times. When he could no longer support a heavy load unaided a characteristic cry would summon another porter to his side, and then, standing back to back, the burden was shifted to give the needed relief. Or, to take another example, Do we really appreciate the symbolism in "Let him take the water of life freely," and of the words, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me," in this country where clean drinking water and generally sanitary conditions are a matter of course? Where the vast majority of people have to buy drinking water almost as we buy milk, the man who pays for a skinful of water and says to the carrier, "Let all who will, drink of it," is a public benefactor; there the value of pure water is known, and its use as a symbol of God's grace is of greater significance than here.

Other Preliminaries

Before writing out a story, or before attempting to tell it, it is well to review the facts, setting them down in a brief outline. This will be as little like the story as the skeleton is like the living contours of the man, but it will be a help to the teacher whose

task it is to invest bare facts with charm and reality that her words may leave no doubt as to their inner meaning. Perhaps all this may seem too much trouble to take over a story whose telling will certainly not consume ten minutes; indeed, a four or five-minute story is quite long enough for your kindergarten child, but its very shortness makes it imperative that every word be in its place and have full soliciting power.

And, lastly, knowing the story, the teacher is now in a position to answer for herself a number of questions that may have arisen from time to time. Why should I tell this story? What is its relation to the daily life and needs of my children? What phase of it will have the closest bearing upon their environment and upon their little temptations? Some one must answer these queries correctly if the story is to be winged to its mark.

CHAPTER X

PREPARATION OF THE PARTICULAR LESSON

(Continued)

The Title of the Story

EVERY story needs a title—a sort of handle by which the children can conveniently grasp it. It ought to be suggestive, apt, specific, and attractive. Barrett, in his book, *Short Story Writing*, says that the title might almost be called the text of the story, which is built up around the central thought expressed by it.

Essential Elements of a Story

Every story should contain a hero in whom the interest chiefly centers; a plot or problem, which is unfolded in the succession of events called the *action*, and a climax—the culmination or highest point of interest. Throughout the action the element of suspense has been carried forward; this the climax definitely ends. Considering the story with reference to its form—it must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. In a story with a moral, the end is the most important part. The beginning introduces the characters, and opens out the scene before us, making the situation plain, either by the use of descriptive com-

ments or by means of dialogue. The latter method is usually more immediately interest-compelling than the former, since children like to plunge into the action. A well-known story-teller was told by a youthful auditor that he liked her stories because she always began them in "the middle." And so the first sentence should call up images that will not only claim, but hold the hearer.

The successful story-teller keeps to the main thread of his narrative, introducing only such facts and characters as have a direct value in developing the plot. All required explanations not properly a part of the story, though necessary to its comprehension, should be made beforehand; nothing is more confusing to the little child, or more disastrous to the effect of the story, than to break its continuity by interjecting what should have been given elsewhere. Events should follow each other in their right sequence; nothing extraneous be admitted, nothing essential left out. Simplicity and purity of language are indispensable. In retelling stories, drawn from the Bible, it is best to keep as close to its inspired language as possible, since there is no well of purer English to drink from.

Devices to Heighten Effect

Some devices well known to the professional story-teller are distinctly useful to the Sunday-school teacher also—as, for example, the use of direct discourse, which brings us face to face with the characters of the story, and heightens the effect of reality, provided we make them talk naturally, in short sentences

and to the point. Another is the repetition of certain rhymes or other groups of words. In the story of Daniel the words "O king, live for ever," used in saluting the king, add greatly to the picturesqueness of the scene by their flavor of the unusual. The repeated use of the words "Thy God will deliver thee," changing only the form of the verb for the king's question as he put it to Daniel, gives a certain rhythmic swing that reënforces the impression made by the lesson thought, and strengthens its appeal to the child. We have only to recall the stories of our own nursery days for confirmation of the statement that those swinging refrains gave acute pleasure: Can't you hear yet, "I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down," from that old favorite *The Three Little Pigs*? *The House That Jack Built* and the tale of *The Little Old Woman and her Pig* are extreme examples of the use of repetition. Their popularity need not be dwelt upon, though it may lead us to the very logical conclusion that it is largely due to the child's rapidly increasing familiarity with the words; as a rule we need to know persons and things before we can like them very much.

Why Not Memorize the Story?

Teachers are sometimes tempted to give stories in the exact words of the author; indeed, many of them are so inimitably told that at first sight it seems presumptuous to attempt to change them in any way. But in all our dealings with humankind it is the direct personal touch that counts most heavily. Especially is this true of all stories told primarily for

their moral effect. Take, for example, the Bible stories, many of which were shaped into their present form by countless retellings around the campfires of the ancient Hebrews: they are indeed very gems, but they must be cut a little differently, and possibly they will need resetting, to make them comprehensible to our youngest hearers. In some cases it will be necessary to amplify certain bare facts; in others, to eliminate details, and to condense a story otherwise too long or too complicated for the specific requirements of the class. Stories from other sources will also often require alteration to make them fit the situation. To know the story perfectly makes one free to adapt it to the demands of the moment; to attempt to remember the exact words in which it is couched fetters one. Memorize catch words and expressions whose exact phraseology it is expedient to retain, but for the rest rely upon your own resources of language and of illustration, and the story will better fit your conditions than it possibly could do otherwise. The exercise will amply repay you in increased mental stimulus, better developed powers of observation, and greater aptness of illustration.

But at least do not read the story to your children because you are timid, or—we hesitate—lazy. Except with a very tiny class, reading a story is far less effective than telling it. The connection between teacher and taught is much closer when the former speaks directly to her pupils than when her eyes are traveling up and down a printed page with only occasional glances for them; and a stronger emotional appeal is made when, looking squarely at the child-

ren, the teacher's facial expression, her properly modulated voice, and her simple gestures can all help to convey the inner meaning of the story.

The Charm of the Story Told

It is in the actual telling of the story that real magic is wrought:—the Druid Oak offers us the shade of his monster branches; the bee one watched yesterday exacting his toll from the heavy-headed clover blossoms is brother to the messenger of the gods; the shining courts of the Temple raise their massive sides before eyes that have been touched with an enchanted wand. For the story-teller who is full of her theme relates only what she herself has seen opening up before her mental vision; the pictorial quality of her ideas predominates, and if the medium between her and her eager little listeners is true sympathy and understanding, a new and delightful world opens its portals to them. A very happy Sunday morning is recalled. The story was that of the Feeding of the Five Thousand—a miracle recorded in each of the four Gospels. The account given in St. John, Chapter VI, ninth verse, reads: "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes." That boy with his (presumed) luncheon of bread and fishes was an interesting figure to every child present. When the end of the story was reached, almost before the last word had been uttered, a boy of five—the liveliest member of the class—cried out, "Is that boy alive now? Where is he? Is he with Jesus in heaven?" And if you could have seen his face! It was radiant with interest and enthusiasm.

Cultivating One's Native Resources

Every teacher owes it to herself to cultivate whatever native ability she may possess as a story-teller, since it is one of her best intellectual qualifications, and in the work with little children an absolute essential to success. Good literary taste is partly in-born, and partly acquired through acquaintance with the classics. A healthful neglect of the "best sellers" in favor of the masterpieces will do much to correct wrong standards. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Bacon's *Essays*, Shakespeare's plays, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, are but a few of the convincingly worth-while books that have survived the test of time.

The use of suggestive and simple gestures is to be encouraged, because they wonderfully fill out the meaning of so much that would otherwise be obscure to little children, owing to their limited vocabulary and incomplete understanding of words—even of those in common use. To overcome self-consciousness, practice before a mirror may help, and is, at the same time, a good way by which to discover ungainly and superfluous gestures that may have become habitual with one. It is much more pleasant, however, to gather the little children of your neighborhood about you as often as possible and practise your art on them. Not only will your efforts be a source of enjoyment to them, but they will be repaid by the children's affection, and by your own increasing assurance and self-confidence. But the teacher who has the power—either natural or acquired—to lose herself completely in her class and in her story, will

neither hesitate to employ gestures where needful, nor will she lack that element of dramatic fire which comes from within.

Some teachers, like some preachers, never gesticulate, but they use their voices intelligently: if a bird or a small animal is supposed to be talking, the voice may be thin and piping; if it is the sly fox that speaks, they let voice and manner suggest his ingratiating efforts to get the best of his victims; if the North Wind speaks, they make him roar and bluster. Very often words can be used whose sound resembles the thing signified; for example, such words as tinkle, twinkle, bells, blustering, splash, horrid. Imitative words, such as bow-wow, baa, ding-dong, tick-tock, mean more to the little kindergartner than do the verbs bark, and bleat, and ring. To be sure, all good things can be carried to the point of absurdity, but the danger of going to extremes is slight where enthusiasm is tempered by sincerity and common sense.

Other Steps in Preparation

Preparation includes, further, a search for suitable pictures, models, and such other illustrative material as may be needed to clarify whatever new ideas the child is to receive; for in his desire to grasp what you tell him he will at once attempt to translate it into terms of his own experience. The blackboard is a very good assistant at times, and offers no insurmountable barriers even to the teacher who modestly thinks she cannot draw. Because the child's imagination can be depended upon to supply some deficien-

cies, the mastery of a few simple strokes will net very good results. Occasionally it helps to place a dim outline of the picture on the board, going over it in class at the proper time to bring it out; but, on the whole, it is better to let your drawing be more spontaneous, growing before the children's eyes the while you supplement the work of your crayon with brief words of explanation or description. A few trials will prove that it is not so difficult a matter to talk with chalk as it seems to the uninitiated.

On Ordering and Arranging the Room

It still remains for the teacher to look about her classroom to make sure that it is in harmony with all the beautiful things she hopes to teach her little ones. Physical environment—mere walls and floors, and ceilings—has a subtle influence, that, like the force of the teacher's personality, is at work when we are barely conscious of it. Let the room be as bright and attractive as it can be made with beautiful and suitable pictures. Even a kitchen can be improved by the judicious use and disposition of screens to hide stoves and other incongruous furniture. One basement kindergarten is recalled where the teacher had concealed the great pipes running across the ceiling by hanging from it a crêpe paper border of golden daffodils. On the little table at her side she kept a vase of fresh flowers, and the result was pleasing and cheerful in spite of the natural drawbacks of the place.

There is no justification for using any Sunday-school room as a lumber-room, storing it with miscel-

laneous pictures, old furniture not wanted elsewhere, and great heaps of chairs temporarily not in use. The child's ideas of church, of religion, and of God should not be associated with recollections of a room that is littered with rubbish of any sort. Love of the beautiful is nourished by beautiful things and helps the child to love what is good.

In the kindergarten, let the small chairs be arranged in a circle for the opening exercises; or, if the room does not admit of that, let them form a hollow square or oblong. In the primary room, where it is impossible for the classes to be entirely separate for any part of the session, let the chairs be so placed about small tables (if you can possibly have the latter) that, for the opening and closing exercises and other concerted work, all the children will be able easily to shift their positions, enabling them to face the leader or department-head. Each department should have its own wall-hooks at a convenient height, or suitable racks, where the child may leave his wraps on entering, and where he can find them without confusion at the close of the session.

In Conclusion

As a last word, the following quotation from Dr. Marianna C. Brown's *How To Plan a Lesson* is given:

"No teaching compares in importance with the influence upon the child of lifting it for a while every Sunday into the consciousness of spiritual realities and of the divine presence. Before going to Sunday-school we must deliberately put ourselves into such a mood" (the *Sunday mood* of which Dr. Brown

speaks). "We must treat the opening exercises in a way to put our scholars in such a mood. We must speak of secular and week-day matters, not as though catering to the child's lack of consecration, but as though the spiritual world permeated all. While feeling in warm touch with all that is human and natural to childhood as with that which is blessed and sanctified from above, we must at the same time be in such close relation with the spiritual that no ordinary Sunday-school incidents can take away that consciousness. The lesson's spiritual truth must be taught in the divine presence, and with divine aid."

CHAPTER XI

TEACHING THE LESSON

Apperception

APPERCEPTION is that form of mental activity by which new ideas are received into fellowship with the already familiar, and grafted upon it. This mental assimilation is possible, however, only where the mind of the learner is already stored with facts of knowledge or experience, or both, that will be useful in interpreting, modifying, and absorbing the new material presented to it.

For this reason an important part of the preparation is the instructor's effort to find out what each child knows of a given subject before attempting to lead him further on the way to knowledge. Our ideas of what the child ought to know are not a safe guide; nor can we rely upon our recollections of what we knew as children; for we have forgotten how halting and wearisome the first steps were, and how imperfectly we saw what lay about us on every hand. Moreover, modern life presents so many diverse phases that children living within a stone's throw of each other may be surrounded by utterly different conditions in the home. This is especially true of those living in great cities, whose environment offers a marked contrast to that of the country-bred child.

The city child will probably know very little of nature or rural occupations, and his imagination will have a small supply of facts to draw upon for the background of your story, when its scene is laid in the country. On the other hand, the country boy or girl has the book of natural history opened before him all the time; the barnyard creatures are his friends; violets, buttercups, and sweet clover blossoms have yielded their beauty and their scent to him, and the birds and bees have taught him some of their secrets. His difficulty will be to picture a New York City skyscraper, or a subway tunnel, or a tenement house in a congested district of the lower east side.

What the Six-year-old Knows

Educationists attach so much importance to the subject of what children know on entering school, that they have made many tests to ascertain from the children direct what basis the home life has provided for the teacher to build upon. The report of such an investigation made by Dr. Hall in Boston is authority for some of the statements following.

Four-fifths of the children questioned did not know what a bee-hive is; not quite one-fourth of them knew a crow; the number of those familiar with the bluebird was slightly larger; only about one-third were acquainted with ants, and not quite half of them knew sheep; even the hen was a stranger to nineteen per cent. Less than eight per cent. knew growing wheat, eleven per cent. knew the willow tree, about seven children of every hundred recognized the oak, and less than half, growing dandelions. More

than half the children were ignorant of the location of ribs, ankles, and waist, and the words dew, seasons, hail, rainbow, and sunrise struck no responsive chord in most of them. Many curious ideas about the sky, the sun, moon, and stars were discovered, and equally fanciful were their notions concerning thunder, clouds, and rain.

To us their common religious concepts are especially interesting. Children will tell us that God makes the chairs, the windows, and even the picture-frames on the walls of the Sunday-school room. "He makes lamps, babies, dogs, trees, money, etc., and the angels *work for Him*." The child imagines God as a person, looking like someone, perhaps, that he knows, and he ascribes human feelings and failings to Him. A boy of three, known to the writer, was looking forward to a May party in the park on the occasion of his coming birthday, but when it finally arrived the day brought rain with it. The little lad jumped out of bed, ran to the window, and cried out, "Oh! I guess God forgot this was Ira's birthday."

The Value of Informal Conversation

But we cannot afford to deal in generalities. Every teacher needs to find out from the individual members of her class what they know, and to secure such a response from them as will indicate that they are themselves conscious of their facts; for, if new knowledge is to be assimilated, both the old and the new must be present in consciousness. Some time before the new lesson is taught there must be a period in which children can be encouraged to express them-

selves freely within certain bounds regulated by the teacher. They will usually be found ready to talk about the things that interest them and are familiar to them, and what they say will furnish us with a key to their social environment and home influences, and will enable us to meet them on their own intellectual plane, instead of talking over their heads or failing to come up to their standard. Also, by laying bare his interests, the child will supply us with a point of contact between the old or already familiar, and the new lesson we hope to teach him. Naturally, the success of this period will depend in a great measure upon the teacher's skill in controlling the trend of the conversation without dominating it, and in so turning irrelevant remarks to account that they will accentuate a point she wishes brought out, strengthen a connection between old and new elements, or bring more clearly to mind what is related to the thought of the day and the instruction-material.

The Question

And how is the teacher to start the ball rolling, and keep it in motion, except by use of that ancient and honorable tool of the pedagogue—the question, whose value in all teaching is not to be over-estimated? It is the password to “Memory-Hold-the-Door,” by whom images of past lessons and experiences are summoned before the attention, and it opens up the pupil's mind to new ideas or to new phases of old ones. Like any other tool, it needs to be kept bright and shining; in other words, the question that is really worth while is a product of careful

forethought. It should be as brief as possible; suggestive—not telling the answer, but stimulating the questioned to active mental search for it. It should be incisive, capable of but one interpretation, and definitely put the very first time to avoid confusing the child. In order to keep the entire class alert, it is well to state the question before naming the child who is to give the answer. We need the question that tests memory to make sure there is something in the mind that will help interpret the new lesson; the stimulating question, to arouse the child's curiosity so that he will anticipate our message with eagerness.

The Child as Teacher

The child's spontaneous activities are an index to his interests, and those that are constructive may rightly be regarded as of lasting value, notwithstanding this idea is almost diametrically opposed to that of an earlier generation.

Dr. Hyde shows us the child's viewpoint at different stages of his development, in an interesting little book—*The Teacher's Philosophy*—in which he divides school life into five periods, describing the dominant interests of each; and points out the correspondence between these stages and the five great systems of philosophy the world has known. The primary child is an Epicurean; wherefore in kindergarten and primary grades the appeal should be directed to his present interests, and the will trained through securing attention to those things that are interesting for their own sake, not for their promise

of some future good. That is, in training the minds and wills of children of this age, if we would work in harmony with nature, we should make use of those agencies that promise pleasure—gratification of instinctive likes. This does not mean that the child is never to be called upon to do anything difficult, but it requires us to make our appeal to his love of activity, his desire to experiment with things—to handle them, to take them apart, to hear them if they are capable of producing sound. Our tendency in the past has been to ignore the intellectual value of touch proper, and to forget that all the senses have a three-fold significance.

How To Secure Attention

Who ever saw a healthy child sit quiet for half an hour because he was commanded to do it? Yet a lively five-year-old boy of our acquaintance, on his own initiative, placed a chair in front of a clock and watched it for thirty minutes, waiting for the cuckoo to call the hour, because his curiosity had been aroused when the half-hour struck.

In the natural order of things attention follows upon the heels of interest, and although its physical attitude is not necessarily one of immobility, the act itself involves directing and holding the mental powers fixed upon a certain object. When we attend, we do so either under the compulsion of an outside stimulus, present to one or more of the senses, as, for example, when the sudden banging of a door causes us momentarily to drop our work, or we do

so at the command of the will. This second sort of attention is unlike the first (which is effortless, passive, involuntary) in that it is an active, voluntary concentration of the mind. Professor James has told us that it is never sustained for more than a few seconds at a time; that as its object slips away from the focal point in consciousness, by consecutive efforts of the will it must be called back again and again.

But will power in the sense of its control to make it subservient to useful ends, primarily because they are useful, is lacking in the young child, in whom freedom is constrained by instinct, impulse, and suggestion. The infant's earliest observation of the lights and shadows dancing on the wall is entirely passive and accidental. When you clap your hands to gain the ear of your class, you are successful because the waves of air have passed their motion on to the sensitive inner ear, and the mind has interpreted the unexpected sound. In neither case has the will of the child been called into play; if interest in what he was doing is stronger than his interest in what you are saying, the school child will immediately return to his former occupation. He is deficient in the mental and moral stamina requisite to purposeful attention at the call of duty, though the play activities of children and their use of the Montessori material demonstrate a capacity for prolonged application to one thing, when their inner needs are being satisfied by it. And so both kindergarten and primary teachers endeavor to plan their work along lines of least resistance as indicated by the child's

native interests, in order to win his effortless and involuntary attention as often as possible. They appeal to his curiosity; they challenge his desire to know and to do; and they give him numerous opportunities to make independent discoveries.

CHAPTER XII

TEACHING THE LESSON (Continued)

Approaching the New Lesson

ONE aspect of the circle or preparatory talk—its usefulness in becoming acquainted with the children—has been dwelt upon. It serves another purpose. Although it is not the time for formal instruction, to make the presentation of the lesson story intelligible and attractive, it may be necessary in this period to explain the meaning of new words, or to describe strange customs. The coöperation of the class may be counted on for help, since children often have curious facts stored away in memory that need only to be drawn out and enlarged upon in order to make them useful in establishing connections, and in bringing out contrasts. Where the story is one of a series a brief review of those that have gone before is in order, and may be secured either by drawing out the leading points of each in response to questions, or from the repetition of the earlier stories by members of the class.

Concreteness Essential

At times it will be economical and profitable to introduce pictures and models, and such other illustrative material as may be available, because your

kindergarten child and your primary child think in pictures more largely than in words, which are, after all, only symbols for things, and mean nothing unless they can be given content by memory, or by the constructive imagination. Also, a word imperfectly understood is quickly forgotten. During Lent one year, in a primary class, a short missionary talk was given each Sunday. On one occasion a Japanese house, with its straw roof and sliding walls, was briefly described. The following Sunday, when the children were called upon to tell what they remembered about the daily life of the Japanese, a bright little girl responded to the effect that they live in houses something like stables. Evidently the oral description of the open sides of the house had suggested to her the wide-open doors of a barn.

The Model a Practical Help

How many modern city children have ever seen a flock of sheep, or a well, or even a twentieth century flour-mill? The pasteboard model of a sheepfold, the tiny model water-jar, and the primitive eastern mill all open up new fields of thought, and assist in the formation of correct mental pictures without which there can be no clear understanding. On one occasion, as a preparation for some of the Old Testament stories, the model sheepfold, with its pasteboard shepherd and flock of sheep, was brought out and examined. The sand table was the meadow sloping down from the hills moulded at one end; a little brook ran along one side, and the sheepfold was set up in the corner farthest from the hills. The chil-

dren placed the sheep on the hillsides, had them follow their shepherd to the brook, and, when evening came, put them inside the fold with the shepherd mounting guard. During all this time there was conversation regarding the sheep and the lambs, their appearance, their white wool, their food, their timidity, and the shepherd's love and care for them. After this "becoming acquainted" exercise, when the song "Little Lambs so White and Fair" was taught and sung, there was not only a realization of its meaning, as far as the facts about the sheep were concerned, but its spiritual truth could be apprehended, and its closing lines, "Heavenly Father, may we be, Thus obedient unto Thee," were more earnestly felt than would otherwise have been possible.

For the school that can neither buy nor make models, the blackboard will often fill the breach. At any rate, it will help round out the child's impressions gained through hearing only; or, as some one has said, through the "ear-gate" alone.

One lesson that it was a pleasure to teach objectively, the Parable of the Sower, entailed the use of a window-box and seeds. There was first a general talk about the soil, its preparation for the seeds, the rocky places, and the hard paths; and a discussion as to the probable growth of the seeds under each of the conditions named—to all of which the children contributed their opinions freely. The work of the sun and the rain was touched upon, various kinds of seeds were displayed, as were also pictures of growing grain, and a reproduction of Millet's Sower. After all the children had felt of the fine,

soft earth, each was allowed to plant a few seeds in the box. It need hardly be said interest in that lesson was keen, and the story well remembered and accurately retold by several of the children on succeeding Sundays. Its application to their lives was expressed in the familiar lines,

“Kind hearts are the gardens,
Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the flowers,
Kind deeds are the fruits,”

which they readily learned after a few repetitions.

Telling the Story

Such constructive preparation recognizes that the child's understanding of the new lesson is aided by his present acquisitions, and furnishes his senses with the materials that will enable him to visualize the pictures contained in your words; for although imagination rears her head in the clouds, her feet stand upon a foundation of reality.

Once entered upon the story, the teacher should continue to its end without interruption for any cause, but should stop before she makes the fatal error of pointing the moral. Sometimes a word of comment or a simple question may be useful in directing the child's thoughts inward, but, ordinarily, from the right kind of story told in a straightforward, clear and sympathetic manner—showing that the teacher had a grasp of the childish way of looking at things—each child will be able to draw the proper lesson. All may not get the same point exactly, because each one's interpretation will depend upon his individual

mental and spiritual bias; but this enhances rather than lessens the value of the story. After a pause of a few seconds to let its significance sink into consciousness, the Bible verse or hymn, conveying the underlying truth of the lesson or series of lessons, may be said or sung by teacher and pupils together. When the picture illustrating the story has been shown or distributed and commented upon, the children may again recite the verses, thereby strengthening the association between them, the picture, and the lesson story.

The Easter Story Told by the Children

But there are times even in the kindergarten when the lesson may be developed through questioning, supplemented by very little explanation and description on the part of the teacher. One year in a certain school the Easter lesson was taught successfully in this way. Naturally a few of the older children had some of the facts at their command, and they were more or less familiar with the hymns used. All gathered about the sand table. Using the third and fourth kindergarten gifts, at the teacher's dictation, the children built a wall to represent that of Jerusalem. The Palm Sunday story was reviewed, and the children repeated the words "Hosanna to the Son of David." In a very few words the teacher bridged over the days between Palm Sunday and Good Friday, whose events were touched upon only in the singing of two stanzas of "There is a Green Hill Far Away," in which the children joined. After this the thread of the narrative was again taken up most briefly, and

a model of the tomb—placed in one corner of the sand table—was examined by the children. The remainder of the story was carried forward brightly and joyously, principally by means of the children's responses, and was concluded with the singing of the Easter hymn.

Children in these first years are always greatly interested in all festivals and holidays, beginning with their birthdays and culminating in the Birthday of the Saviour. For this reason it is customary in most schools to tell the Easter and Christmas stories every year in the lower grades. The teaching of the latter lesson presents no difficulty whatever, nor need the former if we will but turn to nature, which furnishes, both in the plant and insect worlds, many instances of apparent death from which, later, abundant and beautiful life will spring. Nature's winter sleep, the seed, the bulb, the inert chrysalis, all seemingly lifeless, represent the cessation of activity, not the cessation of life; and each in its own good time will awake from sleep to achieve another miracle. The child's experience of these facts of nature must help, though it be but dimly, to an apprehension of the great spiritual fact of the Resurrection. Kindergarten children will be aided to an understanding by acting out the life-story of the butterfly, and of the plant growing and blossoming.

Association of Ideas

Every one of us must have observed that certain words, or thoughts, or sensations, have the power to recall to mind particular events, or other words,

thoughts, or sensations. A friend tells us of an experience that she had on a cold day; instantly we are reminded of an incident in our lives which depended for its color upon the fact that the temperature was very low. Perhaps you desire to recall the third stanza of a poem with which you are familiar, but in order to do so you must first recite the first and second stanzas; or, before leaving your home, you tie a string around your finger to remind you that you wish to buy a certain article when you reach the department-store you are about to visit. When you next see the string it will remind you of the article, because your act built up a connection between the two. In all these cases the connection and recurrence of the various ideas mentioned are due to the number and strength of the associations binding them together. One idea suggests another, either because of its contiguous position in consciousness or because of some inherent likeness that connects the two. Therefore it is our duty as teachers so to present new ideas that when called up by memory they will appear in their proper sequence.

Teaching the Easter Hymn

One well-remembered morning the little nature-talk beautifully paved the way for the learning of the Easter song. It was a lovely sunshiny Sunday that spoke to every child of the coming spring. They commented on the blossoming magnolias, contrasted the conditions then prevailing with those that had obtained in the fall and throughout the cold days of winter; the roots and the seeds, snug under their

coverlet of snow and leaves, were mentioned. But now the sun is warm, the snow has disappeared, the bluebird's song is heard, the gentle rains fall, and the seeds in their dark beds receive all these messages promising new life. The raindrops sink into the earth, moistening the seeds, that the tiny leaves forming inside may finally break through and push their way into the world of light and air. So much interest and enthusiasm were displayed by the children that the teacher, under the inspiration of the moment, asked, "How would you like to be the seeds upon the stalk in the fall, and wake up in the spring when the bluebird calls?" They were delighted. Their suggestions, together with one or two from the teacher, were all the directions needed, so that the play was really almost entirely spontaneous. The little *flowers* stood very straight beside their kindergarten chairs until North Wind (impersonated by the teacher) came and blew the seeds all about the room. As the wind died away, the children impersonating seeds dropped quietly into their places; they closed their eyes, their heads drooped—the winter sleep hushed all things. At last a chord from the piano—a poor substitute for the song of a bird!—stirred them to signs of life. One by one the little heads looked up, and smiling faces turned from side to side. This was the moment to teach

"The little flowers came from the ground,
At Easter time, at Easter time,
They raised their heads and looked around,
At happy Easter time.

"And then each little bud did say.
'Good people bless this holy day,
For Christ is ris'n the angels say,
This holy, holy Easter day.'"

Other Hymns Taught

The play described is too elementary for the primary grades; nor would all songs lend themselves to this treatment, even in the kindergarten. Ordinarily the new song may be sung, the psalm or other selection for memorization be read through, by the leader; new words should be explained; the children should be led to discover the thought of each stanza and to put it into original language, and to visualize in order the different pictures contained therein. This is to avoid confusion in the sequence of the memory images, and the substitution of associated ones. Before teaching the words:

"Above the clear blue sky,
In heaven's bright abode,
The angel host on high
Sing praises to their God:
Alleluia!
They love to sing
To God their King
Alleluia!"

there was a brief talk about angels, in which children and teacher participated, and a number of pictures of angels were shown, among them reproductions of the Fra Angelico series, of the Guardian Angel, and of the Apparition to the Shepherds. When the words strongly convey feelings of joy, or gratitude, or happiness, try to create about the children

an atmosphere that will naturally evoke a similar emotion. Thus the words are filled with meaning, and immediately become a vehicle for the expression of feelings that are a reality.

The repetition, the drill, necessary to fix the words permanently in the memory is the unpleasant phase of this work, because our ideal is temporarily subordinated to it. Where the children are old enough to read, wall-charts may be used to good advantage, and the text of new hymns may be supplied to them for pasting in their books. In some schools it may be possible to enlist the assistance of parents or older brothers and sisters in teaching songs to the little kindergartners.

As to the melody, this will be learned by rote, either from hearing one of the teachers sing it, or from hearing it played on the piano or organ, as the case may be. Simplicity and well marked time division commend themselves to the childish ear and memory. Liveliness is another characteristic that appeals to the majority of children, though quality need never be sacrificed to it. If the song to be taught has been selected far enough ahead, it is frequently practicable for the accompanist to play it in whole or in part at those times when tranquilizing music is required, as before the lesson-story is presented, and before the session is formally opened. The influence of the right kind of music—a few measures of a well-loved song, or of some classic composition, very softly played before prayers, will go far toward establishing harmony between body and soul, and creating that devotional atmosphere we so

much desire during the service of worship and praise ; and will deepen those feelings of peace and joy and reverence that are such positive forces in the moral life, and are distinguishing features in the Christian's life.

Maintaining Order

Nothing has been said on the subject of discipline, because, if all the requirements have been met, the normal child will do what is expected of him, and what he ought to do in Sunday-school. If chairs are uncomfortably large or small, if the room is too hot or too cold, if the classes are so large as to make attention to individuals out of the question, or if lesson materials and methods of instruction are unsuitable, there will be fidgeting and restlessness, and even disorder. As a rule children want to obey ; but if, after everything possible has been done to insure right conditions, a child here and there does not respond as he should, a special study of his case must be made. We may be able to reach him through an appeal to his desire to please his parents or teacher, or, in the case of older children, by rousing the emulative spirit. One kindergarten child, who was given to interrupting the programme at any and all times with incoherent talk about his clothes, or the Fire Department, or whatever fancy dictated, was finally induced to give quiet attention through his liking for the hand-work. On one or two occasions he was deprived of the privilege of pasting the lesson picture or of working otherwise with the rest of the class, and this had a very salutary effect. Sometimes a child's naughtiness is the result of "exaggerated ego," and letting-

alone is the best medicine: when he finds that he cannot attract attention to himself, he gives up trying and joins his fellows.

With normal children, if poor order is the rule, the teacher or head of the department must look to herself and her methods for the reason. It is her privilege and her responsibility so to manipulate environment and teaching material that their disciplinary value will be arrayed on the side of law and order. The behavior of young children is largely a reflection of what they see about them. If those in authority set an example of punctuality, regularity, good-breeding, and Christian courtesy *and expect the same of the children*, very few rules will be necessary (none in the kindergarten), but certain right customs will develop and will be zealously observed, for children have a great respect for custom.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DOING SIDE OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

EDUCATION is a far bigger and better thing than the absorption of facts and knowledge; it is the bringing to perfection of the constructive powers of man, the development of his threefold nature for self-control and efficiency in every situation that life may present. The aim of Sunday-school teaching is the formation of vital character permeated by a delicate responsiveness to Christian ideals of conduct. It is not enough that we give our children ideas that are mere abstractions to be talked about and admired as things apart from self, we must hold before them ideals that will have a soliciting power for the will sufficiently strong to overcome all contrary suggestions; for "action is the perfection and publication of thought."

Habit the Conserver

Because it would be very costly, and even fatal sometimes, if our every act demanded the exercise of the will, Nature has provided us with a nervous system upon which the processes of doing tend to impress themselves in such a way that, with every repetition of a particular stimulus, its response comes more and more readily, until finally the act becomes

automatic, or habitual, demanding no forethought. Other bases of habit, especially in young children, are instinct and impulse. The useful instincts are the material from which good habits may be made; tendencies of the opposite sort need to be checked, and their energy diverted into other and more profitable channels.

Even the baby is subject to the laws governing habit, and long before he enters the kindergarten a strong bias has been given to his character for good or for bad by the wisdom or foolishness of his parents in training him. Where instinct and impulse rule, moral ideas and theories unconnected with daily practice cannot be expected to have great weight; moral *ideas* must grow out of moral *acts*, and the two need to hinge so closely upon each other, as the result of both exercise and example, that, no matter what inhibiting idea may arise, the right reaction will be assured. Therefore, the training of young children calls for emphasis on the doing side, and for guidance in the place of prohibition, that the process of character-building may be free and adequate. The Sunday-school is particularly prone to lay too much stress on instruction and the stirring of the emotions, forgetful that "It is not," as James says, "in the moment of their forming, but in the moment of their producing *motor effects* that resolves and aspirations communicate the new set of habits to the brain."

Expressional Activity in the Sunday-school

There are three phases of self-expression that are, or should be, indissolubly bound up with our Sunday-

school work, which show the required progression from concrete to abstract, from individualistic and selfish to altruistic, from the conception of self as the center of things to the consciousness of God and the capacity to know and find Him. The first of these is self-expression related to the lessons taught; the second reveals itself in service to others; and the third, in Worship.

Expressional Activities Related to the Lessons

It is not what we give the child, but what he gets out of our lesson presentations that is of value in arousing moral impulses to reproduce in life the truths conveyed in song and story. The extent to which facts are intelligible to him is a matter of vaguest conjecture until he has told us, either orally or otherwise, what he knows and thinks. The use of various kinds of handwork and objective material in the preparatory steps of teaching has been discussed; now it is to be considered from the standpoint of its usefulness as a test of knowledge. We may call upon the child to recite Bible verses and songs and prayers; we may ask him to retell the story in his own words; or we may give him pencil and paper or other materials with which to illustrate or to reconstruct his recollections of it. Here, at last, the child is face to face with himself, with what he knows and feels; and his response, full or meagre, will be indicative of the impressions that have been made upon him. If he has failed to grasp the right idea, we shall discover that fact, and be enabled to offer the correction needed; if his conceptions are right,

they will be augmented and vivified by this attempt at reproduction.

Speech and song are obviously practical, and are universally admitted to be good and appropriate forms of self-expression for the Sunday-school, and there is never a Sunday when they are out of place. But persons accustomed to work with young children understand how difficult it often is for them to collect and speak their thoughts. They like to recite a text or verse learned by heart, and are usually willing to repeat after the teacher whatever she may dictate to them phrase by phrase; but many failures precede the successful retelling of the story by the primary or kindergarten child, against which inability to recall the facts and timidity and shyness most frequently militate.

If the story has been pictured in any way, the average child can reproduce it more easily than after merely hearing it, because visual and tactual images are ordinarily more stable than auditory images. The story of Abraham entertaining the three angels was told one day to the kindergarten class, and a poster picture illustrating the event was made. Each child received a mounting-card, paste, and brush, a small triangle of white paper to represent the tent, and four strips of gummed paper, three of one color and one of another. Sitting at their tables with their materials before them, the children reviewed the facts of the story in a conversational manner, and while they spoke of Abraham's nomadic life and described his tent home they pasted the white triangle at one side of the card. Then each placed the strip repre-

senting Abraham where he thought the tent door should be, and, a few inches to the right, the other strips were placed to symbolize the three strangers. Several months later the kindergartner displayed one of the posters and asked for the story, which a girl of five told from beginning to end without hesitation. The tendency to encourage spontaneous verbal expression in connection with that of the hands is one of the best features of manual work.

Kinds of Handwork Applicable

Expressional activities need to be as carefully graded and adapted as any other department of school work. Among those forms of handwork suitable for the kindergarten are

- (a) Model handling,
- (b) Laying forms of beauty,
- (c) Mounting pictures and other illustrative material,
- (d) Stick-laying,
- (e) Drawing, and coloring with crayons or water colors,
- (f) Poster-making,
- (g) Folding and tearing paper, and paper-cutting,
- (h) Sand table picture work,
- (i) Building.

Some of the above are equally suitable for the primary grades of the Sunday-school, notably a, c, and e; as are also (1) Modeling in clay or plasticene; (2) Printing; and (3) Writing.

Much of the regular kindergarten and school material is necessarily used, but usually without reference to its purpose in the week-day school. When the third and fourth gifts are used to build a city wall or the high seat of honor for Joseph's father,

it is not with the idea of training sense or muscle, but to make these objects more real, and to give the children a concrete background for the lesson truth. That the desire to create and make something new is gratified only adds to the richness of the experience. As a rule, it may be stated, whatever adds to the formation of correct ideas of the facts in the story also enforces its lesson.

Enough has been said about models to demonstrate their usefulness in the kindergarten; the primary child needs them also, and will like to reproduce them in clay or plasticene. Poster work is effective and useful in both kindergarten and primary grades, and not too difficult for the older children to try at home. Paper tearing and folding require delicacy of touch, exactness, and neatness, if satisfactory results are desired; too much must not be expected of the little kindergartner. Objects made in this way may be mounted singly or in groups to tell a story. Where colored papers are used, good and artistic colors should be selected.

Drawing

This is a natural outlet for the child's constructive activity, and a vent for his artistic impulses. Almost before he can hold a pencil he wants to "draw." He likes it so much that he frequently has to be restrained from covering the walls as far as he can reach with the evidence of his activity. No subject is too complicated or difficult for him, because his fancy enables him to see what he wishes to see in his lines. Not long since a four-year-old girl handed

the writer a tiny piece of gray cardboard with the remark, "Here's a picture of the Virgin Mary and the Baby Jesus that I made." It was the usual childish attempt—two crude circles for the heads, straight lines for the arms—but, crude as it was, to the little girl it was a picture. If the teacher is sympathetic and helpful these early drawings will answer a useful purpose, and, as his love of the beautiful grows and his power to represent it increases, the child will produce more artistic results. Sully says of children's drawing that "It is not wholly a product of our influence and education, but shows itself in its essential characteristics as a spontaneous self-taught activity of childhood, which takes its rise, indeed, in the play impulse."

It is this very spontaneity that makes of drawing so ideal an occupation for the purposes of the school. Drawing a picture for the story will interest intensely, and give opportunity for the play of originality and imagination. During the circle talk, or the informal conversation of the primary department, members of the class may be asked to go to the board and draw something that will remind the others of David, or of Christmas, or of whatever subject may be under consideration. The number of volunteers offering their services will indicate the popularity of this form of self-expression. Drawing and painting and coloring with crayons are particularly well adapted for the use of primary classes, and may be done either at Sunday-school or at home; but preferably at home on account of the shortness of the session.

The Use of Pictures

Except in the case of very young children, for whom your narrative is less a story at times than a description of the various figures depicted, it is best to withhold the lesson picture until after the story has been told, unless it be to call attention to some detail that will clarify your presentation. Experience proves that children are very easily attracted to good pictures, and that colored ones make a stronger appeal than the black and white prints. Most of the better colored prints are prohibitively high in price, but the Tissot series has been reproduced in a very inexpensive form, and may be especially commended for historical accuracy in showing dress, manners, and customs.

The details of a picture should be clear and large enough to be easily distinguishable—the child wants to understand what he is looking at. Perhaps this is one reason the Madonna and Child and the Holy Family are so dear to the childish heart; that they represent a comprehensible aspect of life is another. In the case of pictures bearing on the Life of Christ it is well to show the conceptions of different artists to prevent the children's acquiring wrong impressions. The many excellent reproductions of fine paintings appearing from time to time in certain Sunday newspapers and in the magazines are a source that the children should be encouraged to draw upon in making collections. Very few of them fail to pore over the "comic" sections of the Sunday paper, and it would certainly be much more advantageous to

them if they could be induced to search the magazine and pictorial sections for illustrations related to their Sunday-school work.

Pictures Related to Self-expression

In reviewing a series of lessons, large copies of the lesson pictures may be tacked upon the screen so that all can see them, and different children may be asked to point out the various persons and to tell the stories. Even the babies will want to go forward to touch the Christ Child's picture. The general review in some schools is conducted by means of a stereopticon and colored slides, many of which are very beautiful. As the pictures are thrown on the screen, individual children or classes are called upon to recite the appropriate Bible verses.

To impress the lesson story, mounting the picture is recommended for all young children, and may appropriately be done during the session. The pictures should be pasted in blank books or on loose sheets, perforated for tying, so that all may be preserved to form a permanent record of the year's work. Either gummed stickers or paste can be used successfully. If the latter is put in small jars or on bits of paper, and applied with a tooth-pick or a paste-stick, the work can be done cleanly.

Printing and Writing

The six-year-old children will surely be able to print the text under the picture; some of the more skilful will write it. The older ones should be expected to write out at home the leading facts of the

story, on the blank page opposite the picture, thus coming a step closer to the more advanced work of the higher grades. Also, the older child should be asked to write out his ideas relative to the application of the lesson truth to his own life, thereby coördinating more closely the Sunday-school teaching and everyday experience.

An idea of sand table work in the kindergarten was given in the preceding chapter in connection with the teaching of the Easter lesson. It is not nearly so generally useful in the lower grades as drawing and mounting pictures, for example, and may indeed be dispensed with altogether until later.

Dramatic Tendency Utilized

Besides the oral and graphic forms of self-expression noted, there is also dramatic representation of the lesson story, and of the lesson truth in various games and plays. Our ideas must be clear and persistent if they are to realize themselves in conduct. By utilizing the play instinct and the impulse to imitate, lessons of great interest and social importance are indelibly written upon the minds of even the smallest children, and, at the same time, the foundation of useful habits is laid. Psychologists tell us that the first step toward the attainment of a desired mental state is the putting-on of the outward signs or appearance of it: if you wish to feel cheerful, wear a cheerful smile and manner, and before long the drooping spirit will succumb to the uplifted

corners of the mouth. The same principle is at work whenever the child engages in imitative plays.

The dramatic tendency is well defined as early as the third year, and continues all through life; but it is probably at its climax between the years of four and seven. Children who are too young to do any but the very simplest forms of handwork are able to imagine themselves branches waving in the wind, the dove returning to the ark, the caterpillar weaving its cocoon and bursting into new life as a butterfly. If words and music can be added to the action, so much the better. The words will awaken and stimulate thought, the action will interpret and make real what might otherwise not be understood, and the music will help to bring about that rhythm of body and mind that is favorable to the cultivation of the higher emotions. Even the primary child likes the right kind of motion-song, and to act out a favorite Old Testament story. In the Primary Department of St. Bartholomew's Parish House Sunday-school, New York City, after the story of the Crossing of the Jordan had been told, all the children marched around the room singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers." They were led by the banner-class, representing the priests, carrying banners and a small model of the ark. This exercise took only a few minutes, but was entered upon with so much enthusiasm that the children must remember the lesson as a result of it. All stories cannot be treated in the same way, nor is it desirable that they should be; but if the Sunday-school session is ordinarily too short for this dramatic play, could it not be introduced as a most appropriate diversion

for the Christmas or Easter party? Certainly there could be no better way of psychologizing the subject-matter of the Sunday-school lesson, or aiding the child to experience it for himself, than to let him assume the part of a character in the story; for when he adopts the attributes and activities of others his sympathetic nature expands, and his understanding is enlarged. Constructive imitation and the assimilative instinct working together lead to a realization of the higher truth and beauty of life long before words can be found to express these things.

Undoubtedly there are other kinds of handwork and other expressional activities than those enumerated here that can be used to advantage in individual cases, and many of those mentioned may be entirely inapplicable to the majority of schools. What each class will do must depend upon the judgment of the teacher. That some sort of self-expressive work be included in the programme is imperative, but the danger of over-emphasizing it must be guarded against, lest its very purpose be defeated. Where too much or too complicated work is attempted, haste and confusion will drive out simplicity and serenity. A proper balance between the various parts of the programme must be maintained; and the handwork, like every other detail, must be subordinate to the whole for the sake of unity.

CHAPTER XIV

SELF-EXPRESSION IN SERVICE AND IN WORSHIP

WHEN the Sunday-school tries to cultivate in its children a spirit of service, and of responsibility to humanity and to the Heavenly Father, it has as a foundation the simple home relations, and the affection for brothers and sisters, for father and mother. Story, and talk, and song, are used to direct attention to the virtues of helpfulness, of gratitude, of generosity, forgiveness, and sympathy, each of which is to be made so attractive to the child that he will unconsciously feel a desire to exercise it. And the moment in which he feels this desire is the time to turn his energies into channels through which he can carry out his noble impulses.

Applying the Lessons

We may begin by letting him point out to us the ways in which he can be helpful in the home; the little acts he can perform for parents, such as running errands, picking up his toys, amusing the baby, and even such difficult things as keeping quiet and out of mother's way when she is busy or ill. If the subject of the lesson has been gratitude, he can be led to see that, though he may be unable to show

his appreciation of his parents' care and loving-kindness in some big way, he can do so by being obedient and thoughtful for others. We shall have to teach him, through his own frequent need for forgiveness, not to cherish resentment against others. If by any chance there is a little quarrel or unpleasantness between children in our presence, we shall need to sift the matter, to the end that the child at fault may be led to see his wrong-doing, and to make reparation. In many little ways we can teach consideration for others and encourage the sympathetic nature to express itself.

The Font Roll

But the obligations of the child extend beyond the persons in his immediate family and circle of friends, and this is a fact that the efficient Sunday-school never fails to bring out. It uses the Font Roll as a connecting link between home and school, and afterward between these spheres and all the world outside. The doing side of the Font Roll appeals equally to kindergarten and primary children, who will be eager to bring in the names of baptized brothers and sisters, cousins, and little friends for enrollment, just as soon as they become thoroughly familiar with the idea. The service of admission, which should include simple prayer and song, heard from time to time, keeps interest alive, and when at last the Font Roll baby is received into the kindergarten circle, he is looked upon as a brother by all present.

It is customary for the school to send birthday cards to the babies, and in some schools to remember

them at Christmas; and mothers are always cordially invited to bring them to all special children's services, and to the Christmas and Easter parties when these are held. Gradually, the children's sympathies can be extended to embrace babies outside their acquaintance, and interest in missions can be developed through stories of little children in many lands, while the older boys and girls will like to hear about the deeds of brave men and women who are giving life and health for the sake of advancing God's Kingdom.

Children's Gifts

The various opportunities for giving that every school affords its children ought to be an outgrowth of their interest in some specific person or cause. Whenever possible, they should have a voice as to the expenditure of the money they bring, and as to the distribution of toys and other things they give. If this cannot be permitted, their sympathies must be gained for whatever purpose the gifts are to be used.

In the majority of schools there are no children who can give absolutely nothing: they will be able to give either of their money or of their time and service. All must learn that, while it is a great privilege to be able to give much, God wants not the gift but the giver; that the child who has little but gives that cheerfully, at the cost of his own pleasure or comfort it may be, is doing his part. No child is too young to learn the joy of sharing a toy, a book, or a stick of candy, or even his play-time to do an errand, for the sake of others, but we cannot teach him this by forcing him to give up what he wants to

keep. Suggestion, not force, must be used. It would be a very excellent thing in many ways if even the youngest children were given a tiny allowance, and then encouraged by their parents to make suitable use of it. In this way the harm of going to father or mother for the Sunday-school offering would be overcome, and giving would mean more to the child than it does in most cases at present.

Special Gifts

In some schools it is the custom to celebrate Thanksgiving by allowing the children to bring food and clothing a few days before, for distribution where they may be needed. In others, a Christmas "Manger Service" is held, when all the children of the school are invited to bring gifts nicely wrapped and tied with neat cord or ribbon, these to be given later to children in hospitals and elsewhere. The money offerings at Christmas and Easter are very often devoted to missions, and whether the pupils approach them in the right spirit or not depends very much upon the teacher. Giving should be made as personal a matter as possible: if the child can make a gift with his own hands, its value is enhanced, to *him*. Perhaps the handwork of the day can be done with some special object in view, such as giving pleasure to the absent members of the class. In one kindergarten visited by the writer the children received colored papers, mounting-cards, scissors, and paste. The flowers they cut out and mounted were sent to the children (absent members of the class) designated by

each little worker. At Christmas the handwork can take the form of gifts for Mother and Father.

Stimulating the Missionary Spirit by Giving

A certain primary class interested in a young Chinaman, towards whose education a part of their money offerings was being used, collected picture post-cards of buildings and parks in the city in which their school was located, to be sent to him. On some of these little personal messages and bits of description were written by the children. In this way their sense of stewardship was heightened.

Or the children may bring flowers, or money with which to buy flowers, for the sick and aged; but it would not be reasonable to expect this of all parishes, or of all the children in many parishes. A recent textbook offers a very nice suggestion in this connection. If the kindergarten and primary rooms will accommodate window-boxes, bulbs should be planted in them in the fall. When the plants flower they may either be used in decorating the church or be sent immediately to the sick. In any case the care of them should devolve upon the children so far as possible.

The Birthday Celebration

In most Sunday-schools birthday celebrations have come to enjoy much popularity. Being the center of things is more or less gratifying to human nature generally, and the pleasure of lighting candles, and of putting the pennies in the birthday-bank, while the other children count them aloud one by one, has its

effect; but if the matter be worked up sufficiently, interest will be focused on the giving side. One dear little girl became so enthusiastic that she brought a dime to give on her grandmother's birthday. She said, "I asked Grandmother if I might give it, and then ran out of the house for fear she would change her mind." In one kindergarten the suggestion that the birthday offerings be used to purchase flowers for sick members of the class was warmly received; and the gifts of a primary class have recently been used to help buy luncheons for a little crippled girl in one of the New York City schools. Other classes might choose to contribute towards the support of a hospital bed for children, or to help defray the expenses of maintaining a child in a missionary school.

Learning to Rejoice with Others

There is a side of sympathy that is somewhat neglected. Very few people will turn an absolutely deaf ear to all appeals for help for those in distress, but many of us find it difficult to rejoice wholeheartedly in the good fortune of others. The birthday service of prayer and praise should counteract this natural tendency to selfishness somewhat, because it asks all the children to join in thanksgiving for blessings bestowed upon one of their number.

The Child's Faith

The part of imagination and imitation in moulding the child's outward life to conformity with moral ideals is easily seen; and his suggestibility, his simple faith and willingness to believe, his trustfulness

and love, are just as plainly the traits that make it the most natural thing in the world for him to turn to the Heavenly Father. One night there was a fire in a certain tenement house. The excitement and noise usual in such cases prevailed, but a little child remained quietly in her bed. Later, when everyone expressed astonishment over the fact, she said, "I was not afraid. Heavenly Father was taking care of us. Nothing could hurt us."

Praise and Reverence

This consciousness of God is one of the ways in which childish faith expresses itself. It finds voice also in prayer and thanksgiving, in praise and in offerings.

All the teaching of the Sunday-school should tend to one ultimate conclusion—the realization of the fact by the children that God is present with them at all times, that He is interested in their every act, that they can do all things in His name, no matter how slight the service may be; that when they feed the birds or water the thirsty plant they are helping Him. With reference to their offerings of every nature, they should be taught that all that they enjoy comes from God, and the act of giving should be connected with this idea by their singing or saying a brief Doxology that acknowledges the Heavenly Father as the Giver of all good gifts. The words should, of course, be so well understood that they come from the child's lips with all the force of a spontaneous and original utterance.

The childish feeling of wonder is easily con-

verted into reverence if the Sunday-school practice and ideals are what they should be. The quiet moment following the talk, in which the child's thoughts have been dwelling on the wonderful creations of the Father, is full of significance to his spiritual nature, for the feeling of awe lingers and exerts its influence, even if he does not actively think of anything.

Prayer

Thanksgiving and prayer should be related to the child's present life, and to the seasons and the lessons that are being taught. In a few words the teacher will seek to express the feelings of gratitude to the Heavenly Father that have been awakened by what has gone before in the programme, and will ask for His continued love and care. Reverently and distinctly the children may repeat after her, line by line, the simple words. Set prayers also may be used, if they are expressions of feelings natural to children of the age using them. The Lord's Prayer is suitable for all children able to say the words, even though they may not understand all of it; for its beauty and impressiveness appeal to them, and its meaning will gradually unfold itself to their developing minds.

The Attitude Toward Prayer

We want our children to feel that when they pray they are talking to God; that their joys and sorrows are of real moment to Him, and that they can turn to Him for help in their moments of temptation. But they are not to acquire the idea that He is to be found in Sunday-school and Church exclusively. They need

to be taught prayers and songs of praise they will like so much that they will use them freely at home. In many cases our influence will be alone in urging them to remember prayers night and morning, and we may have to remind them frequently of this duty.

If we can awaken in them so much love for their Sunday activities that they will think and speak of them during the week; if their admiration for the characters studied on Sunday can be carried over into a desire to hear more about them on the other days, and to live like them always, we may feel thankful indeed.

But the final result is not in our hands. The husbandman can do no more than prepare the soil, plant the seed, water the sprouting plants, and remove such choking weeds as may flourish among them. Our human plant also needs the sunshine of God's grace, and to Him belongs the harvest.

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